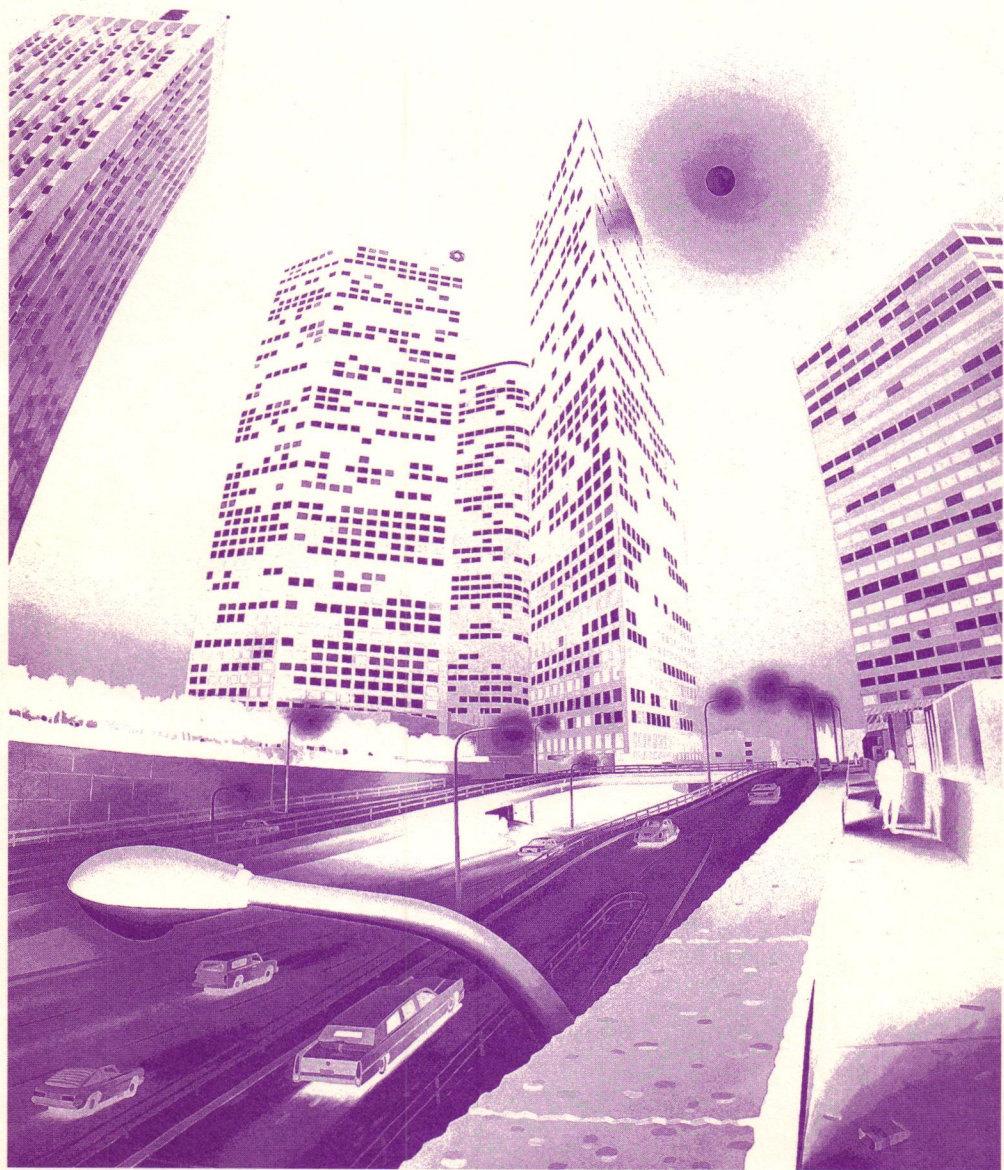
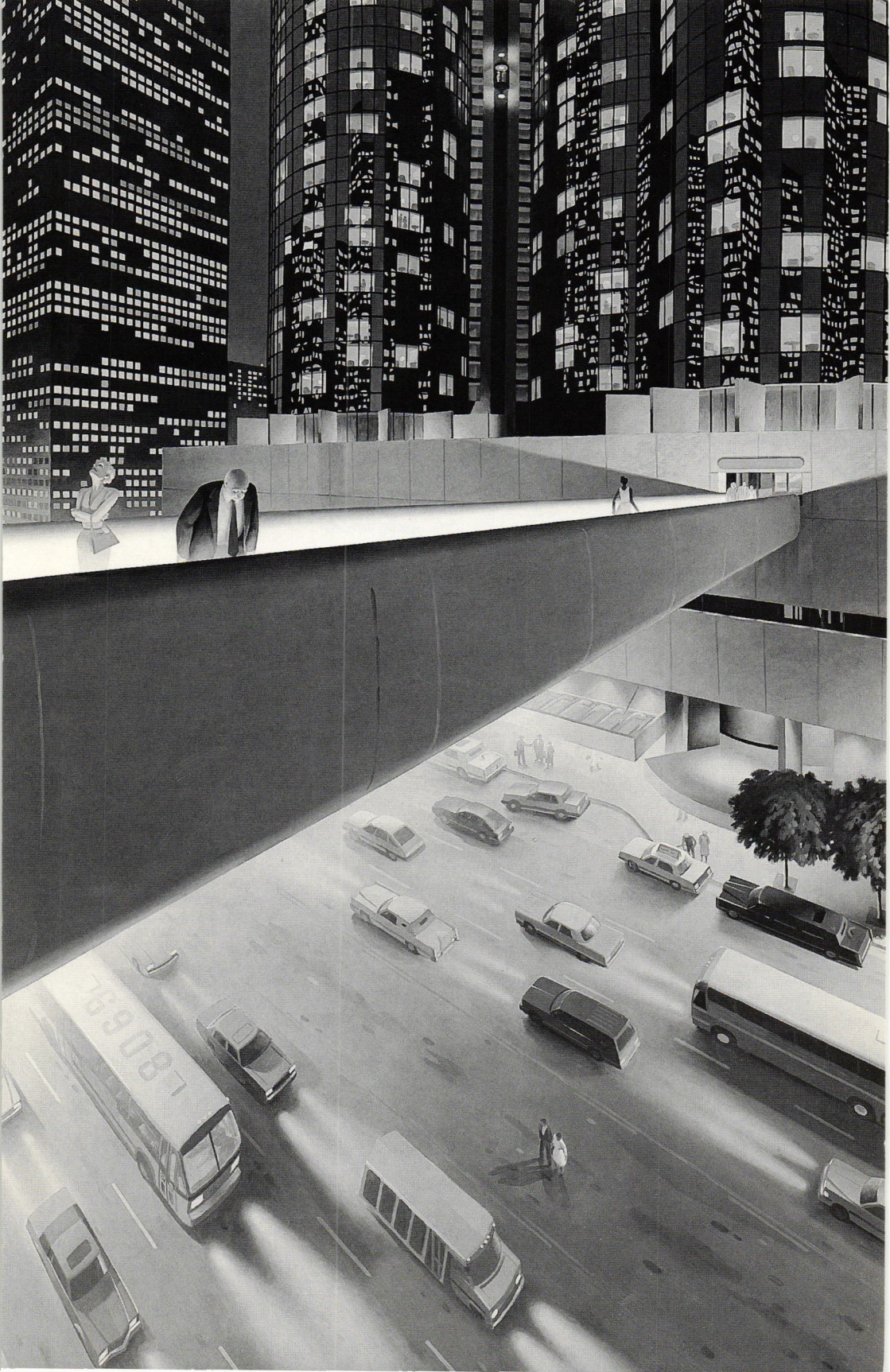


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A R C H I T E C T U R E
CALIFORNIA





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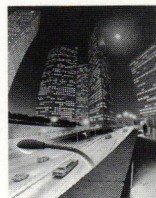
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Cover: Computerized abstraction of James Doolin's painting, *Corporate Rise*, 1986, oil on canvas, 90"x 72". Frontis page: James Doolin, *Suspension*, 1986, oil on canvas, 96"x 68".

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From the Editor: Crossover Dreams

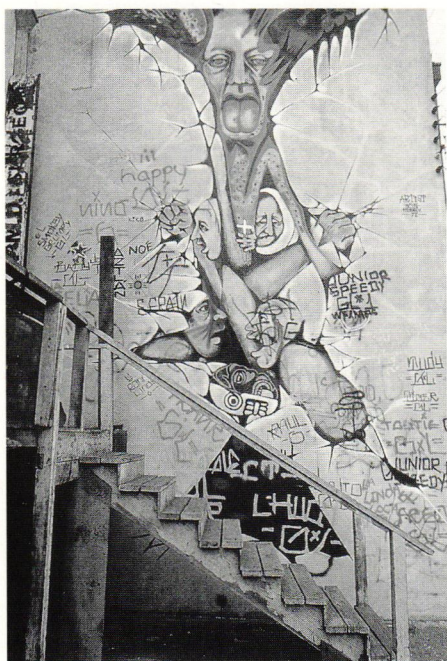
In the very first edition of the new *Architecture California*, before I was its editor, I wrote about the mythologies of architecture rooted in the “cross-over” cultures produced by the Mexico/California relationship, “Maquiladora Modernism.” With the signing of the North American Free Trade Agreement, the pending congressional action on the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, and the feverish debate over California’s immigration policy, the crossing of borders is placed at the center of California’s crossroads.

The authors who have contributed to this special edition of *Architecture California* eagerly present their particular crossover dreams, beginning with Solomon's characterization of the eras

that have shaped California's built-environment landscape. He frames the central issue that is now consuming the brightest in our profession—the future physical configurations of development. This first printing of Catherine Bauer's 1956 talk on American values and the distinct characteristics of our 20th Century cities reminds us that we have been dreaming about these questions for quite some time. Newman, Mogavero, and Gruen each treat aspects of the political economy of architecture practice in California. Newman's incisive revelation of the "mitigating" forces of economics and politics that drive form generation is sobering, critical for us to understand. Mogavero's optimistic economic arguments for sustainability will hopefully encourage others to test his hypotheses and contribute their experiences to further the compaction/dispersion debate. Gruen's advice about real estate investment strategy reveals an uncanny commonality of interest between the often-opposed goals of profit-maximization and increased cultural quality.

Stanton and Winderman alternately address our big and little dreams with engaging essays on the potential and the problems of actualizing visionary projects. Dougherty and Perez take on the hot topic of "diversity." In a common tone, but from different cultural perspectives, they together dream of a vibrant multicultural future society.

Pittas, Doolin, and Gamboa each share their futuristic visions for California. While Pittas imagines a potential peaceful future of cultural harmony and environmental sustainability through the 'adaptive reuse' of downtowns, Gamboa—a 'downtowner'—animates the culture being generated by dishar-



Willie Herron's mural *That Wall that Cracked Open*, 1971, in East Los Angeles attempted to bring Chicano consciousness to youth gangs.



Remember Your Roots, 1994, a mural by artists Tony Osumi and Darryl Mar in Los Angeles Koreatown commissioned by the Social and Public Art Resource Center (SPARC), conveys the neighborhoods concern for mutual respect for the diverse heritages of its residents.

mony and fear of disintegration. The Editorial Board is pleased to once again feature the artist James Doolin whose paintings portend the physical embodiment of our dreams.

The members of the Editorial Board are introduced to you in person through their brief reflections on our compelling topic. I hope you enjoy their diverse insights and are motivated to continue engaging their work. The Letters are crafted for a purpose: The Editorial Board wants to encourage more humor in our dialogues—not only do architects read, but architects are funny—and more cross-pollination with the debates of other regions and nations, as so many of our ideas are global in their genesis and their fruition.

For this fiftieth anniversary commemoration of the AIA California Council, the Editorial Board has devoted the entire eighty pages of *Architecture California* to the theme. However, there are numbers of topics that are not addressed here. The statewide electorate's focus on crime and immigration is clearly reflected, likewise the key professional debate of the present

regarding density and sprawl. Less represented are concerns for the future of the state's military bases, educational infrastructure, transportation systems, ecology, housing stock, the impact of globalization of the economy on regional practices, the serious reevaluation and regeneration of California's guiding myths. The Editorial Board looks forward to these discussions in the future as we return to our regular format, which—through the *etcetera* section—allows us to supplement each new topic with a continuation of the "Crossroads" theme.

Repeatedly in this edition, the question of *common will* arises. In response, I extend my crossover dream thesis: in the face of such powerful mitigating factors, without mutual respect no common will can possibly coalesce to evolve a sustainable global society, ecology, economy, and culture. Echoing the current Bauhaus message faxed to us from Berlin, there is no place for xenophobia on the Pacific Rim. No human being can be illegal in my crossover dream.

Lian Hurst Mann, AIA

Architecture in the Netherworld of Facts

Daniel Solomon, FAIA

In architectural polemic there is a long tradition of regarding the present, whenever that may be, as a moment of crisis, a crossroads. This polemic fits the mold because in California the 1990s appears to be a genuine moment of crisis and change. In California between 1960 and 1965 the current ways in which towns are built took shape. A vast and complicated structure of planning law, bureaucratic procedure, development convention, and lending practice was built around California town plans of the early sixties. These same conventions still shape how architects, landscape architects, planners, traffic and civil engineers, and environmental analysts do their work. In the twenty-five to thirty years that current conventions have been in place, the population of California has approximately doubled, and some fifteen million Californians now live in communities planned since the early 1960s.

The results are in. To see what the post-1965 world is like one has only to take a drive around Valencia or Irvine (don't try to walk) or to visit the outskirts of Sacramento (bigger than the inskirts), most of Silicon Valley, the I-80 corridor northeast of San Francisco, or the Inland Empire southeast of Los Angeles. To any North American or Western European there is nothing unfamiliar or exotic about these places. They are just the way things are, not only in California, but also in Virginia or Florida, or outside Madrid, Lyon, or Milton Keynes. But California is where it all began, where the post-1965 city,

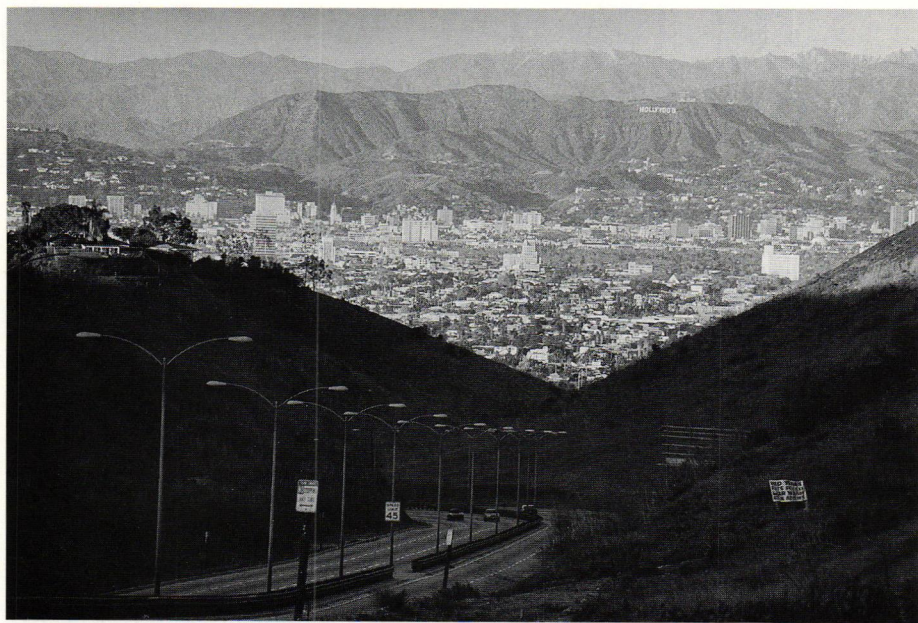
if it can be called that, has been pushed to the limit and tested to failure.

TWO ERAS

The whole evolution of the American townscape can be divided into two eras—one that begins with the earliest colonial settlements and ends at a particular moment in 1938, and one that extends from 1938 to the present.

The first era of the American town commenced when the great agrarian grids were drawn across the continent: the 640-acre sections and six-mile-square townships established by Congress in the East and Midwest, and the Spanish land grants laid out according to the Laws of the Indies in California and the Southwest. Roads followed section lines, and section lines followed the compass through swamps and over hilltops, a transcontinental triumph of the abstract over the particular. The builders of towns in the American West came with the idea of town fully formed in their heads. It was an uninflected rationalist subdivision of the agrarian grid that served as an armature for the grafting of the urban culture of Europe onto the wilderness. The grid of San Francisco is as ruthless to its topography as the agrarian grids of the hinterlands are to lakes and forests.

The second era of the American town was born in 1938 when the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) began work on a national planning code. The residential planning begun



"The view of Los Angeles from the African-American community of Baldwin Hills" by Roland Charles in *Life in a Day of Black LA: The Way We See It*, ed. Roland Charles and Toyomi Igus (Los Angeles, CA: Center for Afro-American Studies, UCLA and Black Photographers of California, 1992).

by the FHA resulted in the FHA Minimum Property Standards (FHA-MPS), a document of incredible power that linked consideration of its principles with federal mortgage insurance. This document initiated the whole explosion of postwar suburbia underwritten by the GI Bill. The polemic behind the FHA-MPS was that of Clarence Stein, Henry Wright, and Charles Perry. The MPS was based on the belief that American gridiron towns could not accommodate the automobile. It imposed a pattern of enclaves in place of continuous urban fabric, traffic was restricted to arterials, and houses stood on curving cul-de-sacs. The second era of the American townscape took shape after World War II and reached its final form by 1965 with the advent of the business park, the introduction of the Planned Unit Development, and the commercial triumph of the regional mall.

Half of what is built in California is new—less than twenty-five years old.

But half of it is not new. Much, in fact, is the record of California's great wave of settlement in the 1850s and 1860s. Today the new parts and the old parts house the same culture and the same economy. People in Seal Beach, which is mostly old, aren't very different from people in Newport Beach, which is mostly new. San Franciscans may dress a little differently from people in Irvine, but they work at the same kinds of jobs and watch the same TV shows. Some nice old towns like Crockett have died, but most old towns—big ones like San Francisco and little ones like Calistoga—have hung on and are doing just fine. Most people who live in the new places come to the old places all the time for things they don't have: streets where you can walk around, bars and cafes, music, theatre, things like that. People who live in the old places tend to go to the new places only when they have to—for work, or to go to the airport or places that discount tires.

Many people in the old places live in ways that were inconceivable at the time the old places were first laid out. They own cars. They shop in supermarkets. They work for large corporations with computers and fax machines. They worry about security and getting from their car to their house without being mugged. They have sunlit kitchens and they barbecue outdoors. They exercise like mad. The re-fitting of the first-era town so that modern life can take place within it is an essential task for a new era.

Architects frequently begin their careers by remodeling kitchens and bathrooms, and usually they learn a lot from these little commissions. They learn how houses were put together in the old days when things moved slower and there was time for craft and care. They learn how things were made when simulated materials didn't exist. They learn about the differences between life in the old days and life now, and how to weave the good parts of both together. Building towns is similar to building houses in this regard. Designing little infill projects is great training. The people who plan new places have much to learn from the old places that have been fixed up. Because California is half old and half new it is easy to compare the second-era town with the first-era town. Many people go from one to the other every day and see the differences.

There are five major ways in which the second-era town is different from the first-era town—five ways in which the second era town is deficient.

First: The second-era town wrecks the landscape, both natural and man-made. The blurred distinction between countryside and town only demeans both. In many parts of California there is no longer countryside or town.

Second: The second-era town devours resources—gasoline, land, air, infrastructure.

Third: As the second-era town becomes more and more congested and as universal mobility chokes itself, people's time is consumed in terrible ways. Life in the land-use map dooms us to hours each day of the vacuous torture of getting from one colored blob to the next.

Fourth: Because it is built in such large chunks, the second-era town discriminates against everyone who is not in a "market sector." The big world of Planned Unit Developments does not make odd little corners for people who find them congenial. It is by nature homogenizing and intolerant.

Fifth: Perhaps worst of all, the sanitized anti-urban world of the second era is a place of diminished experience and diminished insight for its inhabitants. It is significant that the word for the armature of public space in traditional cities is frequently coupled with a word to describe intelligence in the phrase "street smart." There is no comparable form of suburban wisdom to which one could refer, as "mall smart" or "cul-de-sac smart." The urban encounters that educate people to become street-smart are confrontations with a full and unedited range of human possibilities that include failure, tragedy, envy, and evil.

If one thinks of descriptions of streets in the works of Charles Dickens, James Joyce, or Virginia Woolf, one thinks of a dense and infinite stream of the particular where the familiar and the unanticipated mingle unpredictably. To experience the immediacy of the particular, one must walk; driving is another experience altogether. And one must walk in places that are public, without locks or security guards. The predictable and edited human encounters of the shopping mall, the office park, and the condo rec-room are to daily life what Club Med is to travel.

AFTERTHOUGHT

The real American frontier is the metropolis, especially the many sad places at its edges that are caught in a self-perpetuating limbo of semi-development and semi-abandonment. For me, it is in this netherworld of facts that the practice of architecture takes on its deepest meaning and becomes something more than the crafting of artifacts, more even than the crafting of ideas. At the end of the twentieth century, there are not many areas of endeavor that are more absorbing, more urgent, or more important than the remaking of the city. There is so much to do.

These excerpts, which frame Daniel Solomon's provocative book ReBuilding (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1992), also frame the discussion taking place in this special edition of Architecture California.

Do Americans Hate Cities?

Catherine Bauer

Architecture California is pleased to share with our readers this first-time publication of an historical talk given by Catherine Bauer at the University of California, Berkeley on March 27, 1956. In this prescient statement, she articulates many of the problems that still challenge the intellect of the design and planning fields today. Additionally, she proposes in this forty year old speech the essential principles of what is only now considered to be "The New Urbanism." Delight in her speculations and take pause.

Whether or not we like cities, we need cities, and how we produce real cities—however new and strange the form—is a very complicated question to which Americans have given very little thought until recently. But it is a question frequently raised by foreign visitors, so perhaps for a moment we should look at ourselves as others see us.

The United States has been an object of curiosity to the rest of the world ever since the 17th Century. Mountains of notebooks in hundreds of languages have been filled with observations as to our comparative degree of civilization or barbarism. Since the war, however, both the number of visitors and the serious nature of their quest have greatly increased. There are no longer curiosity-seekers, looking for Indians, gangsters, millionaires, and movie stars. With an urgent sense that some decision has to be made by the rest of the world, they are trying to understand how we live, what makes us tick, the difference between us and other coun-

tries, and the lessons to be learned from our experience as an "advanced" capitalist democracy.

I.

In their exhausting peregrinations across the continent, however, there is one judgement that most visitors seem to share. Our plumbing, our food, our art, our auto-mobility, our economic principles, our family practices, and our governmental institutions evoke varied reactions: But whether they come from Paris, Caracas, or New Delhi, they are likely to be puzzled and to a large extent repelled by the general character of our burgeoning metropolitan communities. And if they have special knowledge and interest, whether as architects, housing experts, town planners, or local government officials, the more certain is this reaction. It seems to them that with all our resources, if we had even a modicum of traditional civic pride and concern, we somehow should have done better.

New York, however exciting, they find dirty and brutal; Chicago a stage-set along the lake with endless drabness and blight behind. The tree-lined axes in Washington have a certain reassuring familiarity, but the crumbling shanties and filthy alleys intermingled with marble vistas shake them. They may still have miles of congested 19th Century tenements at home, with admittedly worse living conditions, and they fully understand slums. But the disorderly character of our typical blighted areas strikes them simply as irresponsible municipal housekeeping.

In San Francisco they always love the site and the cosmopolitan atmosphere, but frequently feel that we are throwing away our natural and historical advantages as fast as we can. Visitors who were here during the Ferry Building-Freeway row were amazed, and felt that it explained some of our difficulties and frustrations about redeveloping central blighted areas. To them it seemed obvious that neither engineering efficiency nor maximum mobility would ever "save" old city centers, but only the kind of civic imagination that would enhance their distinctive attractions. In almost any Great City abroad, they pointed out, a commanding historical structure like the Ferry Building would have been set in a proper waterfront park years ago, and to deface it with an elevated highway would be as unthinkable as to transform the Tuileries or the Tivoli Gardens into parking areas.

But it is the fantastic spread of Suburbia that astonishes and puzzles them the most. They pass on to each other the old crack about Los Angeles, "suburbs in search of a city." And they often feel that all our metropolitan agglomerations are pretty well summed up in Gertrude Stein's famous complaint about Oakland: "There is no there there." Everything seems disorganized, wasteful, and formless, and at the same time boring in its standardization, social as well as physical. The degree of class segregation and racial exclusion prevalent in outlying areas usually surprises them.

Sometimes they assume it is all due to untrammelled profit-seeking and our theoretical distaste for public intervention. But it is not difficult to document the tremendous expenditures on municipal improvement, our very considerable public powers over land use (frequently more ruthless than in cities abroad, irrespective of political theory), and the fact that city planning

is a well-established branch of local government with considerable power and prestige.

What they finally decide, as a general rule, is that we simply dislike cities, spend most of our time and resources trying to get away from them, and just do not take them seriously by comparison with the houses, gardens, automobiles, TV sets, factories, supermarkets, schools, freeways, and what not, which we apparently strew around the countryside with no thought for urban community structure to contain them, and with very little concern for the old city center left behind even though quite a number of us still have to drag ourselves back there every day through the traffic.

The judgment that we hate or scorn cities, is, moreover, no casual criticism on the part of people who still look on urban communities as the fountain-head, symbol, and measure of civilization itself. Visitors from poor and under-developed countries sometimes feel uneasily that we are denying primary values that they are struggling for. Continental Europeans are likely to blame the "Anglo-Saxon" tradition, with its individualism on the one hand and its sentiment for greenery on the other, which in their opinion never did or could produce real urbanity or a great cosmopolitan culture. (And it is certainly true that most of the anti-Big-City literature has been written in English, from Cobbett and Thoreau to Ebenezer Howard and Lewis Mumford, not forgetting such disparate leaders as Jefferson and Henry Ford.) But today the British are perhaps the most critical of all, since they have had a remarkable postwar renaissance in ideas and principles for modern city-building, and only wish they could have employed a fraction of the resources we have spent on building since the war to carry out their own bold plans for new community development and reconstruction.

II.

Of course, we must not take all this carping too seriously. As Vera Michaels Dean always says, one of our national weaknesses is the burning desire to be loved, admired, and intimately understood, as well as respected. Our metropolitan environment is for us, not them, and if our values and habits are different, then what suits us will be different too. Perhaps we are shaping an entirely new urban society, freer and more humane in its informality, which only puzzles outsiders because they are judging it by outworn formalistic criteria.

And it is a question whether they would really do any better, if they had to cope with the pace of change and development we have had in this country. If the elegant and orderly European cities were suddenly subjected to the California rate of urban growth, and at the same time had our resources and consumer incomes, I suspect they would have much the same flood of automobiles and small houses on their hands. And, viewing the enduring problems they created for themselves during their own periods of maximum change and expansion a few years ago, I am not at all sure they would cope with the new flood much more successfully than we are doing. After all, as the Colombian architect Jorge Arango once said, London is just the Los Angeles of the 19th Century.

But the fact remains that all our rapid metropolitan expansion is not producing "cities" in any traditional sense. Moreover, there is a rising wave of doubt, dissatisfaction, and concern from inside the United States that suggests that we have not yet found the ideal answer to the modern metropolis, by any means. Practically every national magazine has devoted several major articles during the past year to urban issues, including "blight," slums, traffic congestion, smog, and above all

the manifold suburban problems, from sewers and schools to social relations.

Here are the headlines from a recent article in *Look*.

"Los Angeles: The World's Worst Growing Pains"

"Sun-kissed vistas are smothered in fog[sic]; frenzied traffic makes driving an obstacle race, and the greed of subdividers disfigures the city's natural beauty."

"The dizzy pace of the city's uncontrolled expansion turned the dream of a promised land into a nightmare."

In addition, many academic and professional journals have been exploring and probing these problems with more esoteric zeal. So perhaps we should scrutinize the classic values and purposes associated with cities a little more closely, and try to see what has been happening to them here, and why.

What is a city supposed to be? Every social science discipline, indeed almost every individual professor, social critic, or poet, has a different answer. But here is a general definition from Lewis Mumford in a recent *New Yorker*.

Ideally, the unique task of the city is to bring together a multitude of economic and social activities within a limited area, for the enrichment of life by the continued interactions and transactions of varied groups of personalities.

And whatever the viewpoint or lingo, the traditional answer would usually imply two opposite but reciprocal qualities: extreme complexity of parts on the one hand, but interdependence and a high degree of integration on the other.

To a geographer (and perhaps for the visual-minded in general) a city is a great variety of intensive land uses which nevertheless form a definite physical structure, readily distinguishable from the surrounding countryside.

In economic terms, it is a concentration of numerous specialized functions and activities that together make a compact system of production, distribution, services, and consumption. Socially, a city is a shifting, heterogeneous group of people whose differences engender mutual stimulation and tolerance, laying the basis for a cosmopolitan culture, and providing a necessary bridge between the rural hinterland and the outside world. To the political scientist, the multifarious requirements for services, collective controls, and regional leadership mean that a modern urban complex must have a unified representative government, capable of resolving conflicting demands in the overall community interest.

III.

It is obvious that most of the classic assumptions no longer apply, in any exact or literal sense, to most American cities.

For instance, they are certainly not compact physical entities, clearly differentiated islands in the countryside. Mumford points out that Imperial Rome covered only five square miles, while Greater London today is 145 times as large. But the tendency to sprawl and scatter is still greater in the United States, particularly in the West. Our present major metropolitan areas are enormous, and they are spreading so fast that if present trends continue they will soon coalesce into still larger areas of more or less continuous urbanization, or rural scatteration, if you prefer an invidious and more accurate term. The dean of American demographers, Warren Thompson, suggests that by 1975 or so we may have to look at the whole Sacramento-Stockton-San Jose complex, along with the six counties of the "Bay Area," as a single metropolitan community, and similarly there will be no clear demar-

cation between the Los Angeles, San Bernadino, and San Diego areas. A recent article on Los Angeles in *U.S. News and World Report* was titled, "A City—100 Miles Long?" And of course, on the east coast there is already almost continuous metropolitanization from well north of Boston to south of Washington.

Moreover, even within the narrower limits of the present Standard Metropolitan Areas or "urbanized areas," as established by the Census, these are not real communities in the historic meaning of the term. Although they are distinct economic organisms to a very comfortable degree, there is no integration whatsoever at the political level. Not a single metropolitan area in the United States has a unified metropolitan government, and in much of suburbia there is no representative local government of any kind. Moreover, with their scattered populations, more and more segregated by income, race, and even age-groups, it can hardly be claimed that these are social communities in the traditional urban sense of a diverse but essentially unified cosmopolitan culture.

What does it mean? Are we achieving the basic values and goals formerly associated with a compact, unified urban community in some other way, perhaps better? Or have we substituted entirely new values, whether for better or worse? Do we really hate cities, and if so what do we want in their place? The answer is quite a mixed one, I think, and by no means entirely clear in the present state of rapid change and flux in metropolitan development. But since part of the problem is the very fact that we have hardly even begun to analyse or evaluate all this mushrooming recent development in any scientific sense, I shall risk some brief personal interpretations and judgements, if only to stimulate counter-arguments.

In the first place, many of the economic compulsions that once forced people to live and work very close together, often in the grimmest kind of squalor and congestion, have certainly been removed. And whether it stems from the Anglo-Saxon tradition or our own frontier heritage, the first thing we sought to achieve with our new technological resources and rising incomes was more space. It wasn't the automobile that tossed us out into the suburbs. It was the fact that we wanted a house and a yard, with plenty of light and air and preferably open country nearby, that stimulates the demand for greater mobility, hence more and more automobiles. (Radio, TV, and the flood of housekeeping gadgets came later, after we got the houses and the automobiles.)

Then came schools, shops, and other services, equally low and spread out. And at the same time factories began to adopt the same criteria, to accommodate production lines and parking facilities, and even some office buildings began to move from crowded central districts out into the fields.

The great wave of low-density development certainly means that we have found congested cities incompatible with basic personal and family values, and with economic efficiency in a great many lines of business. But it does not necessarily mean that we are against cities per se or traditional urban values, if we could have them along with the kind of living and working conditions we definitely want. After all, more and more people choose to live within the orbit of major city-centers even though, as Mumford suggests, most of them may be "settling for just so much of the city as they can take in vicariously through a television set."

IV.

As a matter of fact there are a number of diverse but increasingly critical prob-

lems in most expanding metropolitan areas which all seem to point to the need for better integrated development, closer to the old-fashioned "city" in certain fundamental respects than the present pattern of infinite scatteration, but probably quite different from both.

One of these problems is communication. The notion that a metropolitan area, however vast in extent, is by definition a place where you can live anywhere and work anywhere and play anywhere, getting back and forth in your own car, is beginning to look fallacious. Even with all the new freeways and our traditional acceptance of an ever-lengthening "journey to work," there appears to be a limit. Despite our preoccupation with traffic problems, we know very little in any basic sense about dynamics of the "home-to-work" relationship. But some recent studies seem to indicate that a great many people are trying to get their homes and jobs closer together. Moreover, except for certain highly specialized or shifting types of employment, the classic concept of a large metropolitan area as a single unified "labor market" is less and less valid.

Does this suggest that we should pay more attention to the organization of sub-areas in the next spate of urban expansion, which has to be still further out in any case? Perhaps we should make a real effort to pull factories and offices and all kinds of homes and other facilities together into more compact and balanced communities, relatively self-sufficient for most ordinary day-to-day activities.

The fashionable answer to rising communication problems has been "rapid transit," à la New York. But we have been discovering that public transit is no simple cure-all for the typical American metropolis. For one thing, a whole generation is now thoroughly habituated to the freedom of automobile; how many of us will give it up

for even the most luxurious and convenient public substitutes? And anyway, how convenient can a rapid transit system really be, as long as we insist on spreading our houses all over the map which means that Mama will have to drive us ten miles or more to a station?

What the transportation experts have been coming up with, as a matter of fact, is the judgement that relatively compact development is required at both ends, to support an efficient and successful transit system. So even where the primary purpose of such proposals is merely to "save" the old downtown districts and combat "decentralization," they provide an additional argument, not a substitute, for a greater degree of community integration in outlying areas.

Indeed, by combining both proposals, we might finally resolve the time-honored conflict between the centrists and the decentralists, by giving people and enterprise a chance to choose between the Great City complex—"live anywhere, work anywhere"—and a relatively self-sufficient community at smaller scale, instead of the present negative choice between congestion and scatteration.

V.

Along with communication, moreover, there are a number of other critical problems that all tend to point toward the need for better urban integration in the hinterland. The "urban fringe" controversies for instance, particularly acute in the West, reflect the anarchic condition of local government in suburban areas, and the exorbitant cost of endlessly-extended services and utilities due to scattered development. A related question is the lack of adequate economic and tax base to support essential services in "exclusive" residential communities, many of which are now falling over each other to attract industry

to pay for schools, etc. And finally, the big burning issue with private home-builders today is the shortage of suitable sites, adequately serviced, and not too remote from everything else that people need along with homes. Apparently there are limits to infinite scatteration, after all.

On the other side of the coin there is the problem of preserving the very thing we went out to find, namely open space. We are learning, the hard way, that the only means of saving any real "country" in the path of the metropolitan juggernaut, whether for the benefit of Nature-yearning urbanites or for the working farmers, is to keep the urbanites from trying to live in it. This is one cake that we certainly cannot have and eat up too. But today, as Mumford says, "An urban tidal wave is wiping out the rural hinterland, leaving only scattered patches...which themselves are gradually sinking in a steely urban sea."

And now, agricultural conservation itself is becoming the real issue. Not long ago the California State Chamber of Commerce sponsored a conference where hundreds of farmers and businessmen spent the day in earnest discussion of permanent agricultural "greenbelts," to save at least a few of the fabulous orchards that once surrounded our urban centers. In Santa Clara County these two issues are coming together as a practical planning principle, in a pioneering effort to establish definite limits for areas of potential urbanization.

Meanwhile in blighted central districts, quite another set of problems points to the need for better integrated metropolitan development, better balanced urban communities in the hinterland, plus more real "urbanity" in the center if it is to survive at all.

For one thing, there is the marked trend toward heavy and exclusive concentration of low-income families and

minority racial groups in central areas, not because they want or need to be there but simply because nothing is built for them outside. If present trends continue, most of Manhattan and the South Side of Chicago will become solid ghetto for the underprivileged in less than a generation, while the newer suburbs remain lily-white and strictly middle-class....“metropolitan specialization” with a vengeance!

It is our increasing interest in redevelopment and renewal of central areas that is posing this problem, in terms of relocation. It is also necessary to decide for whom and for what the blighted areas should be reconstructed. What is the continuing role of the old central district? Is it still the “headquarters of civilization,” and if not what is it? On what terms can it compete successfully with the suburbs?

These are still groping unanswered questions. But here and there is a growing conviction that if central districts are to be saved, they cannot be merely ghettos, nor can they on the other hand expect to serve everybody and every kind of economic and cultural function. The strictly economic compulsions that created them in the first place are largely gone. Congestion is unpopular. And if they are to survive as “nerve-centers” for the greater regional complex, they will still need something more than a rapid transit system to make them uniquely attractive. In a vague gingerly sort of way, considerations of urbanity and distinction, even of beauty, are beginning to occupy a respectable spot in “redevelopment” planning, not as the dreamy obverse of sound market economics but as an essential factor for economic survival.

The future of the central district like that of suburbia raises fundamental questions about metropolitan structure, which we have hardly begun to ponder. But all in all, if we fed what we

begin to know about all these practical metropolitan problems into an electronic calculating machine, it would probably come up with a fairly clear-cut answer, and an answer that would urgently favor a revival of some of the classic urban values. Strong sub-centers in the hinterland, low in density but nevertheless real “cities” in the variety and balance of their population and functions, and in the fact that they are clearly separated from each other by wide areas of agriculture and open space. And efficient regional communications networks, probably including public transit as well as freeways. And some kind of a core city for certain highly specialized activities and regional leadership, whose relative importance would probably depend on its distinctive attractions rather than on economic compulsion.

But clearly, market economics will not produce this pattern automatically, and the present structure of local government is incapable of doing so, even with the rising interest in planning and the growing conviction that land-use controls are necessary.

Which brings us to the question of the metropolitan area as a political community, and the fact that in this realm we are lacking some rather important characteristics traditionally associated with the “city.”

The metropolitan community is incapable of making any decisions about its functional structure or the disposition of future development, because it does not exist as a governmental entity. Sometimes we are reluctantly forced to set up ad hoc agencies at the metropolitan level to deal with critical problems such as water, smog, or transportation, but these emergency efforts mainly tend to dramatize the need for some responsible overall agency of representative government to resolve the long-term interests of the area as a whole.

Nor is there a network of responsible local governments that could be pulled together into some kind of federation, however loose. Instead there is chaos: the old central city, jealous and frightened, no "metropolis" in the classic sense as a mother of cities, planning and guiding new settlements; other "cities," dozens or hundreds of them, battling each other and everybody else, trying to attract industry or keep it out, by strictly local and frequently opportunistic criteria, trying to annex or develop property that might improve the tax base and shunning every other kind of property; counties, vainly endeavoring to adapt their creaking rural machinery to entirely different purposes; a separate system of school districts; and in the unincorporated areas where the great flood of postwar development has taken place, a crazy-quilt of special districts and private "community associations," concocted in desperation to handle every unforeseen but inevitable problem from street lighting and sewers to political fights with county supervisors over zoning changes.

Therefore, there is no way for people living in a metropolitan area to make any basic decisions about the future of their vast community, hence no stimulus to think or act as citizens of that community.

At the local level, government is likely to be strong in direct proportion to the degree that the area is already fully developed and the land-use pattern set, for better or worse. Under these conditions, planning may flourish, but mainly as a remedial or preservative or exclusionist measure.

There are some exceptions. Los Angeles City did try, however vainly, to guide the development of the San Fernando Valley into reasonably compact, balanced communities including industry, with permanent agricultural belts between. Certain counties, notably Los Angeles and Santa Clara, are

making a valiant effort to shape their future, with such inadequate tools as are available to them. The incorporation of Fremont as the fourth largest city in the state in terms of area, with all but a small portion still in open country, is an ambitious and challenging step. Perhaps they can do better than the San Fernando effort, but it will be difficult without any overall scheme for the whole Bay Area.

If this seems an exaggerated picture, let me assure you that all the recognized professorial experts on local government say pretty much the same thing, if in more academic terminology, and that it could be amply documented from the endless surveys, hearings, and reports of various Committees of the California Legislature, particularly on the "urban fringe" controversies. In fact, there are real signs that leadership may yet come from the State itself, and necessarily so, for metropolitan reintegration.

But what happens to the next ten million California metropolitanites, who are as inevitable as death and taxes, and the effect of their advent on the present ten million, is hardly anybody's business.

Courtesy of the University of California, Berkeley College of Environmental Design Library.

Gridlock on the Frontier: The Architecture of Big Dream Projects

Michael Stanton, FAIA

In the 19th Century, William Dean Howells described California as “Italy looking for its history.” I have always read this passage with optimism about our region’s future. It implies that, given time to settle into its wonderful landscape and develop social institutions, California will engender positive associations, as does Italy. These days, however, it is increasingly apparent that Californians are unwilling to pursue the realization of this potential. Faced with myriad problems, we have lost the will to conceive the grand projects that can enlighten our future.

Even the most sensible and long-overdue proposals languish. A high-speed rail connection between the Bay Area and Los Angeles has not advanced beyond the initial concept, presented decades ago. This inertia occurs despite the existence of usable right-of-ways, need demonstrated by a busy intrastate commute corridor, and clean air legislation pressing for reduction of automobile traffic. Likewise, the state’s response to the inadequacy of its water system remains piece-meal and lacks innovation: rather than look for bolder solutions, such as investing in inter-regional pipelines, we continue to wring a few more drops of water out of the assemblage of water sources we have cobbled together over the last one hundred years. Even one of our more effective state organizations, CalTrans, seems stuck in early 1950s automobile technology, unwilling to fully commit

to the automated highway systems that we need to keep our billion dollar highway network functioning in the 21st Century. In the 19th Century, the Big Four dared to cut a railroad through the Sierras despite the fact that they were not railroad men (Kevin Starr has noted, “was this not *the* meaning of California, that ordinary men could do great things?”). Today we cannot even build a new bridge over the San Francisco Bay.

Innumerable factors contribute to this dearth of creativity and commitment to grand planning. The factor of will is central. The frontier spirit that shaped the early character of our state disappeared before mature social apparatuses that could replace it evolved. The results of this lapse in executive leadership abound. One striking example is our anachronistic county and city political system. California’s original twenty-seven counties defined in 1850 were regularly modified throughout the 19th Century to reflect the changing needs of its citizenry. This sensible adjustment of political boundaries to reflect changing economic and demographic realities virtually stopped in the early 1890s. Except for minor boundary adjustments, the only modification this century has seen is the creation of Imperial County from Riverside County in 1907.

California’s town structure has atrophied. The East Bay is typical: Oakland was founded in 1851, Emeryville

in 1896, Berkeley in 1887, Albany in 1908, El Cerrito in 1917, and Richmond in 1905. When first established, these were all distinctive communities with agricultural buffers between them. Since then, they have grown into a continuous urban community linked together by common orientation, economy, transportation arteries, utilities—and shared problems. Fear of change retards the development of a more sensible and responsive local government. Instead wasteful institutions abound: on the macro scale, the Port of Richmond competes viciously with the Port of Oakland and they both lose business to Seattle. On the micro scale, the redundant Fire Departments of Oakland and Berkeley are unable to coordinate efforts to fight brush fires.

California's leaders, in the land of dreams and boundless opportunity, have forgotten how to dream. The state has settled into a nervous acceptance of the status quo. The absence of large-scale proposals is just one of many signs of this malaise. One symbol of the state's Progressive Era, the initiative, is now used to retard rather than accelerate progress. The message is the same from the generational elitism of Proposition 13—which locks in perpetual advantages to the older white land owners at the expense of young non-white families—to the now regular pattern of voter rejection of investment in the future—save the construction of new prisons to warehouse the disenfranchised: *there is an absence of civic will.*

Referring to the inequitable internship system that exists in some architecture offices, *Progressive Architecture* recently described the architecture profession as one that, "eats its young." The same can, I am afraid, be said for post-frontier California. The commonality between the dearth of daring leadership in our profession and in our state poses the greatest challenge to the architects of this evolving region.

1944-1994-2044: Alternative Futures

Frank Hotchkiss, AIA

As the AIA California Council celebrates its fiftieth anniversary, it sets out to explore visions for the next fifty years. This essay follows a context-priority approach to present the array of projections and prescriptions others have advanced—in the past and quite recently—as guides for our speculations.

A BACKWARD GLANCE

Fifty years ago, we were just emerging from the secular crisis of this century and standing at the dawn of a nuclear age. That crossroads was marked by Paul and Percival Goodman who—writing during the last year of the Second World War—hypothesized three alternative “paradigms” for the urban future in their book *Communitas*. Their “Manual of Modern Plans,” which summarized the influential urban plans of the preceding fifty to seventy-five years with an approach that focused on technological change, divided plans into three groups: Green Belt Plans, Industrial Plans, and Integrated Plans. The first set included Howard’s Garden City and variations thereof, and even included Corbusier’s concepts, which the authors saw as an attempt to bring the garden into the high-density configuration. They saw Green Belt plans as reacting to technology and industrialization, focusing on consumption separated from production.

Industrial Plans included the utopian communities of Owens, various models in post-revolutionary USSR, and the concepts of Buckminster Fuller who emphasized efficiencies of produc-

tion. Integrated plans included Wright’s Broadacre City, concepts for mixing industry and self-sufficient farming, the kibbutz of Israel, and an emphasis on symbiotic regional development, as was used by the Tennessee Valley Authority.

When they projected paradigms of the future they followed much the same classification. Therefore, their first anticipated paradigm was the City of Efficient Consumption, or the “metropolis as a department store,” with populations of millions gathered in central cities that would be totally enclosed and entirely dedicated to advertising, sales, and consumption, with annual libidinous carnivals scheduled to break the monotony of continuous consumption.

The Goodmans’ second projection corresponded to the Integrated Plan concept of their manual. Children would be raised on farms, towns kept small, and emphasis placed on the arts and on communal life. One’s annual schedule would include continuous learning, teaching, and travel, in addition to basic employment and involvement with the farm communities that would likely surround the medium-sized towns.

The third projection downplayed the requirements of production. Based on a model of universal service, the government would supply all citizens with the minimum necessities for life, and they could choose to do whatever they wished—produce goods or services, relax, study, or travel. Towns would serve as production centers, but other settlement would spread wherever those living on the minimum subsistence chose, using prefab mobile units.

The Goodmans' projections were based on their vision of a society—at least in the United States—coming from abundance. What is evident in retrospect is their limited attention to soon-to-erupt civil rights issues, the cold war, feminism, environmentalism, computerization, automation, advanced telecommunication, bio-tech, and other cultural and technological developments. They could not foresee Vietnam, urban riots, free speech, the pill, assassinations, moon shots, the California Environmental Quality Act, a presidential resignation, tax revolts, AIDS, fragmentation of the Soviet Union, massive immigration from less developed nations, or global economic domination by the defeated enemy. And, while they were not targeting California, they had no premonition that one state alone would grow over a fifty year time span to exceed 30 million, or that Southern California would grow to over 18 million.

ONE GENERATION BACK

Two decades later in 1971, the *California Tomorrow* plan had interesting similarities and differences with the Goodmans' projections. Edited by Alfred Heller, the president of "California Tomorrow," the plan's task force included Nat Owings, Harvey Perloff, Willie Brown, Vic Palmieri, and Si Eisner. The plan's schema was simple: describe "California Zero" as the condition of things in 1971, "California One" as the probable future approaching the year 2000, and "California Two" as its desired alternative. Their approach borrowed from then-popular systems analysis: identify "disruptions" or problems, look for the underlying causes, formulate driving policies, and then develop component policies or actions to attack the causes.

The projected California One scenario was quite bleak. It rightly pre-

dicted continued civil unrest, resource depletion, worsening pollution, infrastructure decay, congestion, waste, growing single-purpose bureaucracies, and declining quality of life.

The policy recommendations for California Two included: "provide political strength," "provide economic strength," "guide settlement," and "guide resource use." The authors called for extensive reorganization of government, with strong elected regional governments and a powerful appointed State Planning Council; tax-base sharing; removal of capital gains in real estate; limited, if any, additions to urban land; transit sufficient to permit conversion of freeways to open space; lots of recycling and reuse; strict environmental standards; high taxes; a guaranteed minimum income; and a strong zero population growth program.

Elitist? Perhaps. Practical? At least somewhat. A number of the proposals have been enacted or at least are still being seriously discussed. Synoptic? Yes, in some ways not reaching as wide or far as did the dreams at the turn of the century or the vision right after World War II. But an insistence on bold planning for the future was clear.

RECENT EFFORTS

In the years since the *California Tomorrow* plan, there have been many books and articles analyzing and describing changes in the economy, in the way we build our cities, in the way we live. Recent planning efforts focused on California have included the *LA 2000 Plan* (1988), *Vision California 2010*, revisited (1990), *Bay Vision 2020* (1991), and the *Draft Regional Comprehensive Plan* by the Southern California Association of Governments, SCAG, (1994), each of which shapes our current context statewide.

LA 2000

The *LA 2000* report considers the entire region, and sets goals for livable communities, environmental quality, individual fulfillment, enriching diversity, and the development of a “cross-roads” city. Recommendations address growth management, housing, transportation, reorganization of court and probation systems, environmental management, education, human services, economic development, and state actions to create new regional management agencies and modified taxing and funding programs.

VISION CALIFORNIA 2010

Recapping a similar 1988 report, *Vision California 2010*, authored by the California Economic Development Corporation, focuses particularly on the economic health of the state. It examines changes in the global economy, demography, and technology, and provides recommendations on human capital, economic infrastructure, and fiscal and legal environment. It calls for a stronger state role, stronger regional authority, growth management, and broad use of market incentives.

BAY VISION 2020

The *Bay Vision 2020* report sets forth goals for an improved physical environment, harmonious communities, economic well-being, and affordable housing. Emphasis is clearly placed on the need for growth management (including urban growth boundaries, compaction, densification, and infill) and on the specifics for a new regional commission that would consolidate the work of differing agencies, and conclude with recommendations for the ongoing management of the region.

SCAG REGIONAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The draft *SCAG Regional Comprehensive Plan* is to be adopted piecemeal, with most sections to be considered

only advisory for the SCAG members (the local governments in the six county region). Along with a very complete environmental impact report, the plan contains sections on: strategy, the economy, growth management, regional mobility, air quality, housing, human resources and services, finance, open space and conservation, water resources, water quality, energy, hazardous waste management, integrated solid waste management, and plan implementation. Its goals are to achieve an improved standard of living, quality of life, and equity. Key recommendations concern support for economic development, for fair-share housing, for a shift toward self-regulating or market-based implementation.

STRATEGIC GROWTH:

TAKING CHARGE OF THE FUTURE

The recommendations of Governor Wilson’s Growth Management Council are complex, contradictory, bureaucratic, and potentially quasi-paralyzing, given the fact that they all cost money during a recessionary period and require a shared political will during a period of contentious electoral confrontation. Already the Wilson administration’s commitment to a market-driven approach places the “good business climate” goal of strategic growth, and its corollary “deregulation” at odds with its other goals. But planning will occur, and it will nudge, push, or occasionally dramatically shift the direction of ongoing change.

The key questions are: What will be the dynamics of that change? And what will be the guiding visions, intentions, and beliefs that steer the change?

CULTURAL CHANGE:

VISIONS AND INTENTIONS

Economic Factors. The state economy is likely to continue moving toward expansion of the service industry with a

decreasing manufacturing sector, with an increasing polarization of high-skill vs. low-skill workers and an increasing tendency to sub-contract and increasing numbers of small companies. Additionally, footloose new regional economies and national groupings will proliferate, with continued growth in importance of the Pacific Rim to California's trade.

Demographic Factors. We can expect continuing immigration, legal and "illegal," with higher birthrates of immigrants and a rough balance or even net decrease in domestic migration. The result will be a state in which there is no majority race, a population that is younger, more diverse, and increasingly divided into classes due to differentials in skill, education, and economic and political power.

Technological Factors. We can expect an increasingly electronically-driven, information highway-oriented world (remember how Emerson predicted the world would become "one vast brain," or Mumford predicting the "ethereal city"). Cyber reality, genetic engineering, and biologic science will advance. There will be further space exploration; advances in sub-atomic physics and knowledge of "unified field"; new fuels and energy sources; "lean" cars, computerized roads, high speed rail.

The foregoing grist for the futurists' mill really doesn't provide any image of the future California. To architects one might say, "build prisons, then emergency shelters, and then the grand projects." But the big question is whether we will indeed get the major crisis, and if so what will it be? A 7.5 quake, which is not unlikely, could create this crisis for California, though our resiliency is proving stronger and stronger on this score. Or we might expect something more global: international nuclear terrorism or chemical or biological warfare by small desperate na-

tions. What might grow from increasing tension between have and have-not portions of the globe? Might genetic engineering lead to the crises, or major ecological breakdown, or famine beyond any seen before? Their very consideration could bring about the crisis-style action and social consensus needed in advance of the most serious of breakdowns.

In the face of such devastating potential crises, the rising focus on sustainability could be the catalyst for a unified crisis response and a larger social purpose in the next era. Sustainability is a challenge for California because of our rates of growth and change, and thus a special opportunity for California architects who already have a leadership role in this area.

It is interesting that a book such as *The Celestine Prophecy* now tops the best-seller list. The final "insight" in the "lost manuscripts" predicts gradual, deliberate depopulation of the planet and then population stabilization within "holding capacities." *Communitas* implies such a policy; *The California Tomorrow* plan explicitly called for a population control policy, and current controversies over immigration raise the issue of population control. The popular book *Ecotopia* calls for the same approach, and it is found in Native American philosophies, which are gaining increasing attention.

This paradigm shift could be linked to a new expression of spirituality. It is interesting that the second Parliament of the World Religions was held in Chicago in 1993, the first having taken place one hundred years earlier at the Columbian Exposition. Such a coming together of all religious faiths, including indigenous ones, could be linked to the new focus on sustainability, though current world events certainly argue otherwise.

With advances in biologic/sciences and genetic engineering, what will be

the role of the rapidly growing elder population, especially considering the costs of their care, and the distribution of society's wealth between the generations? Add this potential generational conflict to shifting ethnic patterns, and there is real potential for confrontation. Look also at the current debate over euthanasia, assisted suicide, abortion—issues which can only be made more complicated by increasing medical skills and knowledge.

And consider the compelling popularity of the recent neo-traditional town planning proposals, as well as a rising interest in "community." What does this suggest for the future designs of our settlements—our cities, towns, and villages, both new and renewing?

ALTERNATIVE FUTURE URBAN FORMS

What sort of built environment are we creating? What is likely to be needed? Can we, the architects and urban designers, contribute ideas that will nurture a healthier, more life-affirming society? One way to approach this is by "paths of probability," somewhat similar to "decision trees."

A first "branch," then, is whether the state continues its rapid population growth, a condition which state policy alone can only impact in a limited way. If we then examine slow or no growth, a next branch concerns whether this is the result of lower immigration and births, or of accelerated out-migration, the first condition tending to slow shifts, the second to accelerate them.

Next, consider the probable degree of regional or macro-scale dispersion. Most current proposals for state-directed growth management call for compact growth, and this is the current AIA position as well. All the press for densification, infill, urban limit lines, and contiguity of development support the compaction form, and it should be more viable under the slow- or no-

growth condition. Still, there are powerful forces leading to dispersion even where there is limited growth, as has been witnessed in the Chicago area.

Now consider the probable degree of mid-scale centering, the degree to which mixed use, moderate density city or town or community centers are likely, either through new development or redevelopment. Since growth itself is limited, such intensifications are likely also to be limited.

Look at the alternative of continued rapid growth. This could occur through continuing high rates of foreign immigration and birth, with zero or negative net domestic migration (the trend), or through still higher levels of immigration and birth with sharply increasing net domestic out-migration, or through decreased immigration and births with significantly increased net domestic in-migration (a situation more like that of the sixties). Continuation of the present trends seems most likely, but given controversies over immigration and population stabilization the alternative is a possibility.

Will there be macro-scale compaction or dispersion? With the added population (on the order of 6 million per decade statewide), to accommodate these people, or even the major portion, through compaction (densification and infill) seems highly unlikely, though more compaction might well accompany the increased immigration scenario. With a return to sixties-style growth, major compaction would seem all the more unlikely.

At mid-scale, what is the likelihood of centering vs. a more pervasive spread pattern. This would seem to be very possible, especially with more compaction, but also with a sizable share of growth dispersed, though then it would be less certain. The growth provides the increment with which to achieve centering, both with new and redevelopment. Intensity, spacing, size,

land-use mix of centers could play out in various ways.

There are several points to this exercise. One is to recognize that there are important scale considerations in thinking about compact urban form. To look at this in more detail, consider the three major goals set forth by SCAG: standard of living (general economic vitality), quality of life, and equity.

One can make the point that dispersion offers the most diverse opportunities for economic vitality through development, and that while there may be added infrastructure costs, there are lower land costs. Similarly, dispersion can result in more diverse living environments, more community-scale voice in government, more contact with nature at the urban edge, and even more flexibility for ongoing change, infill, and expansion. A better quality of life? A quality of life more tuned to American dreams, to the increase of telecommuting and working at home? As for environmental quality, it is not clear that macro-scale dispersion is more damaging than compaction, that it necessarily means more energy use or water importation, or air pollution. Indeed, it may mean additional aquifers for conjunctive use, less congested commutes, less concentration of NOX and hydrocarbons, all depending more on the mid-scale plan arrangements. If this is conceivable, then the big issue becomes equity.

Does everybody share in the opportunities for rising standard of living and for improved quality of life? This may be the toughest urban question we face: the "explosive situation" of an expanding underclass. In part, this will need to be addressed by government programs to improve education and healthcare, however much we may wish to eliminate these expenditures. But, as argued in the recent book *Apartheid* (Massey and Denton,

Harvard University Press, 1993), continuing spatial segregation may be the major factor that must be overcome.

Under slow- or no-growth, achieving improved residential income integration is more difficult, since there is less change altogether. If the segregated situation is based on increased out-migration, presumably of those with more resources and skills, then there is even less chance for integration, since there are then fewer opportunities to share.

If we have continuing growth, it may at first appear that compaction has the best chance to bring about integration and sharing of opportunities. This would rely especially on retrofitting existing suburban or "outer-city" developments, as well as densifying "inner-city" communities. However, it may well be that the opportunities for integration are as good, or better, with a more dispersed form, which requires less forced change to existing neighborhoods, and offers the opportunity to develop new socially-integrated communities. In addition, it is likely that more diverse economic growth can be attracted, and more education, housing, and town designs incorporated. Further advantages could concern the scale of government, the diversity of physical settings, and, perhaps most importantly, a recognition of what appears to be a pervasive and deep-seated longing for space, mobility, and privacy alongside the longing for community and common purpose.

Regardless of the macro-scale urban forms that evolve, the challenges of centering, mixed use, alternative transport systems, and sustainability will need to be met at the mid-scale. Likewise, regardless of the emphasis on one or another form, there will be design challenges for both new and renewing/retrofit development. Ultimately, however, it will be the processes we develop to assure the fullest opportunity to all citizens that will be most critical.

Petrified Suburbs and the Landscape of Mitigation

Morris Newman

The post office is the only place in Rancho Penasquitos where we can find architecture with a capital "A" in this northern suburb of San Diego. Designed by Richard Friedson in 1991, and subsequently published in *Progressive Architecture*, the Rancho Penasquitos Post Office is a handsome example of California avant-garde, and displays that style's concern with the sensuous qualities of materials. The front elevation is a wall covered in irregular slabs of red sandstone, from which emerges a bunker of glass block. Marking the front entrance and exit are two enormous steel boxes, as lovingly finished as David Smith sculptures. Inside, the floor is cool concrete, accented by patches of the same sandstone as found on the front elevation. Carefully detailed wooden panels encase a wall of post office boxes, while above our heads, a luminous green band of diffused natural light marks the transition between the lobby and a clerestory tower.

The post office might have added a note of variety to the otherwise bland, self-contented landscape of Rancho Penasquitos. In this case, however, the post office has been set back three hundred feet from the roadside, so that the building is barely visible to drivers. Through this setback, dictated by zoning, an interesting building has been marginalized, and made into a mere curiosity, rather than an integral piece of the urban fabric. In this setting, it seems like a moody suburban teenager who is trying to set himself apart.

From the post office, we have a vista of the red rooftops of Rancho Penasquitos, a master-planned community. Here the official idiom is of stucco and tile, which covers virtually all the houses, as well as a commercial center near the freeway, although these "Mediterranean" buildings are far more uniform and rigid in design than their European sources. At the heart of the community is a shopping center, which is a single large block, with its own internal circulation system. The center is "anchored" by a supermarket and a drug store and edged by retail strips facing inward to the parking lot, which can accommodate about one thousand cars on five acres of asphalt. The stores are what leasing agents call "neighborhood-serving retail." There are several bank branches on stand-alone pads, as well as a dry cleaner and a pet supplies store, a doughnut place, a greeting card shop and a sprinkling of ethnic restaurants.

The shopping center has a "good location," that is, it has convenient access to regional transportation. A four-lane perimeter road, which connects directly with the regional arterial, State Highway 15, loops around the shopping center. The street is the widest in Rancho Penasquitos, for the purpose of traffic mitigation: the extra lanes are necessary to accommodate the high level of traffic that funnels on and off the freeway. The road is the busiest and fastest moving in the community, encircling the shopping center in a continuous swarm. Although designed for traf-

fic mitigation, the road is actually not well suited to accommodate the cars coming and going from the shopping center, and traffic occasionally snarls when drivers take a leisurely approach to the parking lot, or when other drivers, finished with shopping and tired of waiting for an opening in rush-hour traffic, impatiently push their way into a traffic lane.

Although the post office is only across the street from the shopping center, it is not convenient to walk from one to the other, because this town-center has been built to the scale of the automobile, with wide streets and enormous blocks.

The landscape of Rancho Penasquito, as elsewhere in master-planned communities and new towns of California, is neither natural nor designed, in the sense of design as a total, unified composition. Instead, this landscape has been molded by various forces, including economic, speculative, and political. Public policy has a role in this landscape as well, but only a minor one, and then only as a reaction or a corrective to other forces. Although this landscape is highly engineered and planned in some senses, it is not designed, at least not as a whole. Or, to put it more accurately, it is a congeries of different designs that have little to do with one another and lack the hierarchy or coherence that would make cities enjoyable and fully habitable. It is sobering to become aware of the very minor role of architects and city planners in the creation of this landscape, even though the stated goals of those professions is to influence and benefit the environment at large. Instead, the design elements supplied by master planners and architects are the finishing touches, the cosmetic finishes to processes that are not intrinsically about design.

This is the Landscape of Mitigation. Here, the purpose of planning is

not to create the City Beautiful, but rather to ward off the worst excesses of development. In a sense, we are still living in undesigned cities. Planning departments, properly speaking, do not actually create master plans. Instead, they function like traffic cops for competing uses. The General Plan of every California city is really a blueprint for development, in which open space and transit are inserted like afterthoughts around the central events of tract home building and industrial subdivisions. In other words, the general plan is a political document, in which property owners, neighborhood groups, developers, and politicians conspire to generate revenue and preserve property values. The problem with the Landscape of Mitigation, of course, is that in its efforts to merely avoid the most damaging fallout of development it tends to turn new communities into something equally undesirable.

Several forces have conspired to create this mitigated landscape. The most obvious is speculative homebuilding and strip-style commercial development, which have been the chief form-givers in California for at least a century. That is aided by population growth in a state that is expanding, by both natural increases (i.e. live births) and migration from Central America, Asia, and other parts of the U.S., although that has slowed sharply during the recession.

Subtler, and perhaps even less sensitive forces are also at play, such as the California tax structure, which allows cities and counties to keep much of the sales tax generated in their communities. "Fiscal zoning," in which local governments seek to fatten their tax base with new construction, has become the backdrop of much of the development that has occurred in the state since 1978, the year that California voters approved Proposition 13, which cut back property taxes to 1 per-

cent of their assessed value and left local governments impoverished and scrambling for new revenue. One solution to declining revenues has been development fees, levied primarily on home builders, who complain that fees are adding \$25,000 to the cost of each housing unit. Ironically, cities often find themselves financially stressed after a development cycle, because new houses and commercial buildings usually become a net drain on the city's resources after yielding their up-front fees. That stress, in turn, sparks a new cycle of projects to keep City Halls afloat and planners employed. The result has been that nearly every mid-sized California city has attempted to create a regional commercial district, to compete with such budding districts in neighboring cities. In Los Angeles County alone, there are at least sixteen distinct commercial centers, most of which have grown up since Proposition 13, while a comparable proliferation of competing commercial districts can be found in the Bay Area, Silicon Valley, and in the Greater Sacramento area. The result, of course, has been rampant overbuilding and a stagnation in commercial real estate values.

The role of city-as-developer especially comes into play in redevelopment areas. As a creature of the Urban Renewal movement of the 1940s and '50s, the California Redevelopment Act of 1950 was created to remove "economic and social blight" from cities. The Philosophy of Urban Renewal placed an emphasis on real estate, and gave cities power to take land from its owners, assemble several parcels into attractively large holdings, and either sell them or enter into participations with developers. The real estate emphasis, of course, has survived through the many changes and amendments to the original statute. The state is now riddled with redevelopment agencies (more than two hundred at last count).

Redevelopment started as a way to remove "blight" from cities, but has evolved into a method of raising money for cities. Until recent reform legislation, redevelopment itself had become a method for tax-starved cities to siphon a portion of property taxes for tax-starved cities. Revenue generation, rather than urban design considerations, became the driving force behind new development. In this way, planning and policy became means of promoting development, even in cities where market conditions or demographics did not justify such growth.

The redevelopment landscape varies. In older cities, redevelopment can be almost benign, such as on Brand Boulevard in Glendale, where new, revenue-generating office buildings stand side-by-side with two- and three-story buildings that have found new life in adaptive reuse. In newer communities, however, such as those in the fast-growing suburbs of the so-called "Inland Empire" in Riverside and San Bernardino counties, redevelopment districts spawn shopping centers and "power centers," which are clusters of enormous, featureless boxes surrounded by acres of asphalt. Promising heaps of revenue for local governments, off-price retailers often persuade local cities to pay the cost of construction, in the form of subsidies and tax rebates. In the name of "eliminating blight," suburban redevelopment projects have created a new kind of auto-oriented, anti-urban blight.

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) tried to bring growth into balance with environmental values by obliging developers to offset the "negative impacts" of their projects. In some cases, the mitigations are welcome, as in wetlands that have been preserved, or stands of oak trees that are left unfelled. In traffic and air-quality impacts, however, the doctrine of mitigation veers toward perversity.

Road widening, restriping, and public parking construction are done in the name of "traffic mitigation." To mitigate air-quality and traffic problems, planners have embraced the doctrine of "jobs-housing balance," which requires developers of master-planned communities to create employment centers in new bedroom communities. The doctrine is revealed to be specious, when suburban commuters pile onto freeways to drive to jobs in the employment centers twenty or thirty miles away.

Suburban communities like Rancho Penasquitos have their own brand of mitigation, in the form of design-review boards, limits on new housing units and CC&Rs—codes, covenants, and restrictions—whereby homeowner associations in newly developed cities attempt to freeze the visual style of residential neighborhoods in the unsubstantiated belief that sheer uniformity is more attractive and will preserve property values. While city officials and residents often defend their slow-growth or anti-growth policies on "environmental" grounds, the real intent is to create the Petrified Suburb—a place of chaste, changeless gentility, and perpetual appreciation of real estate values often harboring a not-too-subtle bias against low-income housing.

Recently, the Landscape of Blight has been challenged by the new doctrines of Neotraditionalism and Peter Calthorpe's concept of Transit-Oriented Development. At first glance, the emergence of pedestrian-friendly planning seems tonic, because it suggests that planning with enlightened social values and artistic quality can find a constituency in California. Even more, it suggests that city officials could be guided by good city form, rather than approving projects they dislike and later trying to conceal the ill effects of development through mitigation, or by trying to insert "urban villages," often

little more than outdoor shopping centers, into the wasteland of master-planned communities. Because Neotraditionalism and Transit-Oriented Development carry the banner of environmental quality, such projects have gained popularity with city councils and county supervisors who want to promote growth but are uneasy about environmental harm. In fact, of the thirty-odd "new towns" currently proposed throughout California, nearly half claim to be either Neotraditional or designed and/or influenced by Calthorpe. The danger remains, however, that the environmental rhetoric is hollow, that developers are insincere and undisciplined. Cities that "buy into" the promises of such developers should be careful to insist on performance standards, as well as periodic reviews of progress on those promises. There is also the danger that some developers become nostalgia merchants and create CC&Rs that make Neotraditional Towns into Petrified Suburbs as sterile as Rancho Penasquitos. In the worst case, Neotraditionalist design is nothing more than a gloss over the existing development pattern of suburbanization and urban encroachment. A larger question is whether Neotraditionalism can surmount the forces of mitigation and deliver cities that are liveable without first having to be fixed themselves.

I would like to acknowledge the help and suggestions of William Fulton for this article.

Searching for Diversity in the Urban Wilderness

Brian Dougherty, FAIA

Wilderness: "A confusing multitude or mass, an indefinite great number or quantity." A rather strange way to view the urban environment, but perhaps not. The urban jungle, the asphalt jungle: the metaphors for our cities suggest that we view these ever-changing masses of steel, concrete, and occasional flora as something to fear, something to conquer or be conquered by, something to survive. As we look at urban structure today, we see a paradigm shift taking place in the cultural and institutional framework, one that is registered in the physical reality of the place. We are truly at a crossroads. We have a choice to make.

As we seek to survive in the urban wilderness, we develop an increasingly heightened sensitivity to identity, to what differentiates each person from the mass of humanity. Identity, either chosen or imposed, slices and dices us according to ethnic heritage, culture, age, gender, religion. This 'balkanization' in our societal order seems to be a worldwide phenomenon. Identity groups clash with others over power and position, and ultimately inhabit a built environment that reinforces these ethnocentric or culturally-circumscribed attitudes and behaviors.

Have Americans forgotten our legacy as a union of distinct peoples? Has a culture developed that believes success resides with the survival of the fittest and fiercest, who retreat from societal interaction to maintain their social comfort but draw on the city for its resources and opportunities? Taken

to a further extreme, are we building competing societies within the physical limits of cities, which each turn inward to nurture and enhance the lives of their members to the detriment of the collective life of some social 'whole'? Are we actually creating the urban wilderness we fear? Do we have a choice?

As a society, our population grows increasingly diverse. *Time* magazine, in a recent cover article, looked at the changing face of the United States and projected a vision of the cultural makeup of the near future, one that, in fact, already exists in California. We are rapidly becoming a state without a dominant ethnic or racial majority. We are a plurality. The 'common vision' that developed historically as the distinct imaginations of disparate peoples dissolved into the majority culture's melting pot has now blurred, and all of this is taking place within a technological revolution that engenders change at lightning speed. It is from this potential for cultural chaos that I suggest our future will grow and prosper, *if* we choose to create a forum and a form that embraces diversity without demanding the sublimation of the individual.

The growth of our cities has been based upon an agenda of cultural dominance. European cultures arrived on the shores of this continent five hundred years ago and imprinted the land with settlement patterns that reacted to or echoed their homelands. The indigenous nomadic culture was quickly displaced in the North Ameri-



This urban park in southern California has become a multi-functional center of activity for this diverse neighborhood. With its surrealistic fighter jet climbing structure it is at once a playground, annual community carnival site, day worker job center, gathering point for seniors and home to a shifting population of homeless.

can continent by the fixed, centralized, and defensive planning of a culture who viewed the land as an adversary. Indigenous societies of South America, which had developed highly structured and centralized city patterns much like those of Europe, were displaced and destroyed. Planning was based on the creation of the melting pot. Individuals were encouraged to become like the dominant group, to assimilate.

The language of planning reinforced the dominant values. Each individual had to choose between ethnic identity and mainstream acceptance. Political, social, cultural, and physical forces all focused on a pyramid structure dominated by the few and supported by the many while the American Dream held out the promise that anyone could climb the pyramid. Distinct ethnic and cultural identities were maintained in the urban fabric through neighborhoods that insulated the bridging generation from the daily demands of assimilating into the greater society. The public realm and the leaders who built its infrastructure—the major form givers of public interaction—shared a common vision of the path to success. Two centuries of grand public-works projects—boulevards, parks, and libraries—were all constructed through a top-down approach and invested with

a paternalistic view of uplifting the public. Cultural identity was something to look back on fondly—roots, the “Old Neighborhood”—but strength was derived from leaving that identity behind and becoming an “American.”

That is all changing now. As the majority culture loses its social dominance as well as its numerical plurality, new forms of societal order and urban form emerge. Drive down the streets of Los Angeles, the major post-World War II urban environment in this country. Where is the public realm that previously facilitated connection? Groups are becoming increasingly ethnocentric. And settlement patterns based upon cultural dominance are reconfiguring into a multi-cultural fabric of loosely-connected but distinct enclaves. Why, in dissolving the majority culture, is the new society choosing to heighten differences, identify turf, draw borders, turn inward, and shield new micro-centers from both intrusion and extrusion? Part of the answer certainly lies in the current state of the State and the nation. A paradigm shift is taking place in which, both literally and figuratively, the ground is moving under our feet. The unifying model of the future presumably shared by the collective ‘we’ is unrecognizable, and the path forward is as yet unknown.

We can attribute these changes to a number of forces. The economy is not just experiencing a temporary downturn, it is going through a complete restructuring: from war to peace, from industrial to information technology, from consumption to regeneration. At the same time our infrastructure is aging. Should we rebuild or replace? What will support our vision for the next two hundred years? Our leaders don’t lead, they manage. We grasp for heroes and find few who occupy the light for more than a fleeting moment. It is a fluid, dynamic, energizing, and demoralizing time.

When faced with uncertainty, it is human nature to reach for the familiar. We look to our families (which these days often provide little stability); we look to our neighborhoods, our schools, our culture, our homeland; we try to construct an identity. With an increasingly pluralistic society, there is a need to establish who we are in relationship to the whole, to provide a self-created sense of security and belonging. Disfunctional families are being replaced by the "extended-family" of gangs. Neighborhoods are becoming insulated enclaves that focus on self-preservation and "taking care of one's own." Economic self-interest is replacing communal vision, as resources are stretched and unified goals dissolve. We are without a shared agenda: a cold war, a mission to the moon, or a booming economy.

It is not just the societal fabric that is fraying. To paraphrase, *We shape our public realm and then our public realm shapes us*. We are suffering from

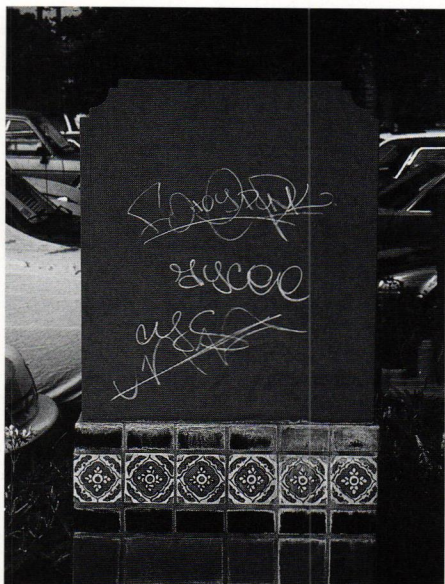


In trying to root this otherwise typical southern California retail building in the Southeast Asia Community, the owners have erected this "cultural/religious" shrine at the shopping center's entry.

a lack of investment not only in the social programs that support the fragile web that connects each of us, but from a lack of investment in the infrastructure that provides the stage for diverse interaction. The public works projects that have been constructed during the last few decades have focused on movement, not on place. We move vehicles; we move water; we move waste; we move energy. The public spaces that have been constructed during the recent past have, much like a disembodied Bauhaus design, tried to achieve the imagined benefits of generalized multipurpose open space—good for everything and, therefore, not reinforcing anything. We have ignored the edges; we have ignored the fact that cultures, freed from the requirements of assimilation, now seek to rediscover and reinforce their roots, their diversity, and want to share that diversity with a wider group which can appreciate differences of age, culture, ethnicity, religion, and gender.

I drive through Los Angeles searching for the 'Sproul Plaza' of the south. I search for a public realm that offers the opportunity to gather together to celebrate diversity. I look for a language that communicates to everyone without demanding the homogenization of each individual. I look for the edges that knit the patchwork quilt together. What little public realm I find is fragmented, deteriorating, and designed more often as a buffer to separate diverse pieces of our society, rather than a forum for sharing. The lack of investment, both financial and creative, in a meaningful public realm during the past decades is catching up with us. I see two directions that this inertial system may carry us as a society.

Without the creation of a public realm that draws our multicultural family together, there will be continually growing self-interest. Enclaves will develop methods of reinforcing the



The common urban language of the 1990's uniting the diverse subculture of the community.

boundaries between their physical, social, and cultural needs and the competing needs of other groups. Investment will be directed toward more and more finely-focused local infrastructure—schools, parks, roads, and services—as the perceived need to raise everyone to a higher level fades, and dwindling resources are hoarded for neighborhood rather than communal gain. Physical manifestations both reinforce and redefine the tension and competition between diverse neighbors and between generations. Graffiti becomes the common language of interaction between diverse elements of the society. Physical edges are defined as boundaries to defend. The old syndrome of the “other side of the tracks” becomes not something to overcome, but rather something to further cement. We see a rising tide of ultranationalism and culturally-focused violence. We cross from microculture to microculture. From Little Saigon to Leisure World to Rodeo Drive to Watts to City Walk there is no investment in common ground, no investment in a shared vision, no

investment in the richness of diversity that will be our ultimate societal strength in the next fifty years.

We have a choice. We can design and invest in a public realm, one that celebrates diversity: a public realm that recognizes the unique contributions that each individual, because of their differences not in spite of their differences, can make to society; a public realm which recognizes that we are culturally unique and that, much like a diverse economy, we can draw strength from that broad base if we are given the opportunity to share in a constructive and meaningful dialogue.

Models exist to study and build upon, some new and some decades old. Models through which an attempt has been made to address the issue of diversity in the development of the public realm. We can look back to the sixties and forward to the next millennium. We can look to Sproul Plaza at UC Berkeley and to the new Pershing Square in downtown Los Angeles.

Assembled and modified over a series of decades, Sproul Plaza is famed as a cultural icon of the sixties. But if we remove the mystique of the time from an analysis of the physical environment, we are presented with a public space that works on a multitude of levels. It is an anchor that welds together the public realm of the city and the private realm of the University. It's a space that, in its simplicity, offers a range of scale, from the open but contained space of lower Sproul, to the highly active upper Sproul. Level changes, small spaces, large spaces, podiums from which to speak, identifiable gathering points for small groups, informal seating. It is possible to listen to African music or evangelical preaching, buy a bagel, and discuss conservative and radical politics all within a few yards. It is also possible to simply pass through the space as a detached observer, on the way to class, on the way

to eat, as a tourist, as a resident, as a student. Why does it work? It works because of its location, surrounding uses, variety of scale, three-dimensional richness and the interplay between the incredibly diverse population and the physical realm in which it exists. It is difficult to ascertain how much of this activity was envisioned as part of the original plan for the Plaza and how much of it has simply been circumstance. Perhaps that issue is inconsequential. Perhaps the results are what counts, that, and our ability to understand and use those results.

The new Pershing Square in downtown Los Angeles was masterplanned by Ricardo Legorreta with Hanna/Olin Ltd. According to the planners the design for the park is a combination of Latino and Anglo-American notions of park design. In this interpretation, the Latino park is a hard-scaped *zocalo* or plaza. The Anglo-American ideal is one of ornamental greenery, arranged in stiff decorative patterns. To employ this multicultural concept, the park contains an open-air amphitheater surrounded by palms—which reflects the Anglo tradition—and a fountain tide-pool paved in river stones—which represents the Latino influence. The spatial organization further strengthens the concept of multiple uses. Legorreta notes that picnickers in Mexico often



As a metaphor for our diverse society, the train gathers a multi-cultural, multi-gender, multi-age community together to achieve a common goal.

set up string barriers to mark off their own private spaces. In Pershing Square, level changes, ramps, and landscaping create a space that is unified, but can also be used as a series of small 'rooms'. The key element for success in this reinvestment in the public realm is its strong effort to knit the park back into the surrounding city. Edges function to unify rather than divide, drawing in the surrounding workers, residents, children, and seniors in order to utilize the park, take ownership, and make it the forum for a new urban multiculturalism.

We are on a path. As architects and planners we have a unique ability to both give visual form to the abstract and to understand and synthesize highly complex issues. If we stand aside and allow the public realm to develop without a vision for a future that embraces and celebrates diversity, we may find ourselves losing the public realm entirely and designing for an increasingly hostile and defensive society. The urban wilderness will reach up and reclaim the landscape. If we choose instead to provide leadership in the crafting of the public realm for the next century recognizing the new language of a multicultural society we will be creating an endowment for generations to come.



Legorreta's new Pershing Square in downtown Los Angeles fuses European and Latino traditions and concepts of urban planning to create a new language and unifying form in the urban wilderness.

Financial Impacts of Urban Form: Their Implications for Sustainable Cities

David Mogavero, AIA

The form that cities take as they grow and change will substantially determine the quantity of resources consumed for shelter, transportation, policing, fire protection, education, health care—indeed, every aspect of every citizen's every day for centuries to come. This efficiency, or lack thereof, is a prime determinant of the cost of living and, therefore, ultimately, the quality of life for a community and its citizens. It is also a determinant of a city's ability to compete in increasingly competitive national and international markets.

And yet over the last forty to fifty years, while we have made major advances in many fields, the United States has grown the most inefficient cities in the world. We invest in new infrastructure and, before it is utilized fully, we move on. We build at densities and in locations that maximize the capital and operating costs of all systems. Segments of our society or corners of our cities deteriorate and we abandon them.

Many of these problems can be associated with the middle-class push to the suburbs (and now the exurbs) and the low-density sprawl that has been its primary physical form. Government has attempted to fill the voids that have been left behind, but its resources are too meager compared to those of the California real estate machine. In recent years, despite the immense fanfare, Neo-traditional and Pedestrian-Oriented Development has only provided a more human and tolerable face to the sprawl. It has had little

or no impact on the more significant underlying need to redirect our real estate engine toward filling the holes in our existing communities.

While sprawl creates immense residual costs for communities, the rules of our economic system have allowed many real estate developments to externalize or pass on the costs to current or future residents. These rules are changing, however, providing new opportunities to undertake an "infill" approach to urban growths.

I believe it will be easier to understand the opportunities these changes present if we first examine the financial impacts of urban form.

THE COSTS

These costs can be broken into two general categories: fiscal impacts on government, and broader economic effects on the community. As California communities learn to live with fewer revenues, they evolve away from financing growth through general fund revenues, and the fiscal impact of growth patterns therefore receives increasing levels of analysis.

One of the most recent comprehensive analyses of these costs was done for the *New Jersey State Development Plan*, a growth management plan that evaluated conventional sprawl growth patterns against an alternative involving greater reliance on redevelopment "infill," some higher density new development, as well as traditional sprawl.

The alternative is not a revolutionary plan, but a rather modest tweaking of existing patterns. However, with 520,000 more people expected in New Jersey by the year 2010, the projected savings are significant. The alternative plan projects a \$1.18 billion savings in roads, water, and sanitary sewer construction, or over \$12,000 per new dwelling, and \$400 million in direct annual savings to local government, resulting in savings that have a total present value of \$7.8 billion.

This analysis is borne out anecdotally by local experience. While homes in new suburban sprawl areas around Sacramento, such as Laguna West or Stanford Ranch, require fees of \$15,000 to \$30,000 per dwelling for new infrastructure, our office has just completed a twenty-five-unit condominium project, Southside Park Cohousing, within walking distance of the Capitol, that required only \$6,500 in public fees. This is simply because it did not require new roads, sewers, or water systems.

The project was constructed by a small Sacramento builder, without the benefit of the large savings in labor and materials that the volume production typical of suburban development provides. Nonetheless, because of the infrastructure differential, the project was able to include raised wood ground floors, hardwood-finish floors, front porches, and other amenities not typically available in production homes, and still equal the market on a "per-square-foot" cost basis.

This evidence would suggest that the responsibility for the excessive expense of new housing lies less with municipalities' need to charge fees or their desire to restrict their boundaries, as some would suggest, but more with builders' refusal to construct in places that do not require new infrastructure. In addition, this project put twenty-five middle-income families (including



Southside Park Cohousing, Sacramento. Mogavero Notestine Associates, architects.

twenty-eight children) in a neighborhood that sorely needed their presence. The location, in turn, provided personal "cost of living" reductions, such as allowing many of the households to share the use of a single car.

The New Jersey Plan and our local example do not account for other reductions in public infrastructure costs that result from "infill" growth strategies, such as:

- Storm drainage, which is required when expanding into new land;
- Busing costs for schools.
- Increased per capita fire station requirements;
- Travel and cruising time for police services;
- Travel time for other public services.

These governmental costs receive the most attention because government agencies hire economists to calculate and report on these costs. In fact, they are really only the tip of the iceberg.

The bigger issues are those that affect day-to-day overhead costs for families and have a cumulative impact on local economics.

According to the AAA, the average annual cost of owning an automobile in the United States is \$4,422 if you drive 15,000 miles per year (it is nearly \$6,000 in California). This does not account for externalized public subsidies or deferred environmental costs. A bus pass in Sacramento costs \$480 per year. However, studies (including one by the California Air Resources Board) indicate that before people will adopt public transit lifestyles, they need easy access to several bus routes. How do we accomplish that when low-density dispersed growth patterns make even one bus route per neighborhood uneconomical, whether amid traditional sprawl or neo-traditional sprawl?

The Bay Area Economic Forum has estimated that \$2 billion per year is lost while people sit in traffic congestion in the Bay Area. Similar analyses have been done by the Florida and Washington State Departments of Transportation and by the South Coast Association of Government that support these results.

Analysis of the implications of compliance with Federal air quality standards for the South Coast Air Basin indicated that health care costs would be reduced by \$4.1 to \$20.7 billion annually if limits for ozone and particulate matter were met.

The National Association of Home Builders has evaluated differences in construction costs for low-, medium-, and high-density development. The effects they suggest are diminished somewhat by the complications of most infill projects, but our experience indicates that dwellings built at five units per acre cost \$5,000 to \$20,000 more than units built at fifteen to twenty-five units per acre. This does not include the infrastructure variations discussed above.

In addition, higher-density, mixed-use neighborhoods offer other less documented savings: 1) the economic value of the enhanced independent mobility for children, elderly, and handicapped; 2) decreased building energy consumption and reduced pavement areas; 3) decreased water consumption for landscape irrigation; 4) increased crop values for agricultural areas adjacent to urban areas.

I would argue that there is another, perhaps larger, cost as well, the loss of personal economic potential as a result of inadequate attention to child rearing. There are two linkages between this problem and urban form: first, as the middle class vacates older urban (and now suburban) neighborhoods, they leave concentrations of poverty and poor children with fewer role models for economic success; second, with the increased cost of a sprawl lifestyle, even the average middle-income family requires two incomes. Children are left with less parental time. Sylvia Ann Hewlett, author of *When the Bough Breaks: The Costs of Neglecting our Children*, suggests that, over the last thirty years, children lost approximately twelve hours of parental time a week.

Even without these arguable factors, and without those costs that have been less thoroughly evaluated, the well-documented fiscal and economic factors represent a cost differential of \$9,000 to \$14,000 per year per household.

This is all urban overhead. Not one penny goes to enhanced economic productivity, and, at the same time, this lifestyle gradually erodes the ecological resource base available to future generations. Sprawl does not just impact those that are left behind. It impacts the ability of people, businesses, and communities to compete on an equal footing with those from other cities and towns.



Alex McLean

ECONOMIC TRENDS

For a variety of reasons, these economic realities have been hidden from policy-makers and the ultimate decision makers, consumers. Over the past few years, there have been events and trends that are forcing policy-makers and consumers to consider the consequences of urban planning choices.

First, in the immediate post World War II era, the United States enjoyed a huge productivity advantage over all other nations in the world. Germany, Japan, and now many other nations are closing that gap. It should be noted that much of the United States' productivity gains, and now the gains of other nations, result from ignoring or externalizing long-term costs, such as air and water pollution. These nations all have cities that are immensely more efficient than those in the United States (especially California). The daily overhead in a worker's life will have increasing relevance to a city's ability to compete. Neal R. Pierce's book *Citistates: How*

Urban America Can Prosper in a Competitive World provides an elegant discussion of this subject.

Second, federal and state transportation and air quality laws are slowly reducing a community's ability to externalize long-term costs when evaluating growth decisions. These laws will increase the cost of driving and therefore the cost of remote locations. In addition, federal funding for new transportation projects increasingly requires that long-term costs include air-quality conformance plans. These trends will result in less funding for new roads and more funding for transit, pedestrian, and bike projects.

Third, local government in California is broke. Before Proposition 13, local government simply absorbed the cost of constructing new roads, sewers, water lines, and fire stations within the general fund or, in part, through assessment bonds. In addition, the inefficiency inherent in maintaining larger amounts of infrastructure per dwelling unit was less evident, because of the revenues those units generated.

Since Proposition 13, California communities are often charging, up front, for some of the cost of new infrastructure; however, most still do not capture the full cost. The consumer, making the choice to sprawl, is now paying more of the cost they are creating directly, instead of passing it on (externalizing it) to the rest of the community. In addition, some communities are recognizing and charging for the operations and maintenance deficits that result from new dispersed, low-density growth as well. The City of Lancaster is charging fees on the basis of a computer model that estimates the city's actual costs for servicing a residence in differing locations. While this trend has been slowed somewhat by the 1990s recession, its continuance is inevitable as cities and counties struggle to make ends meet.

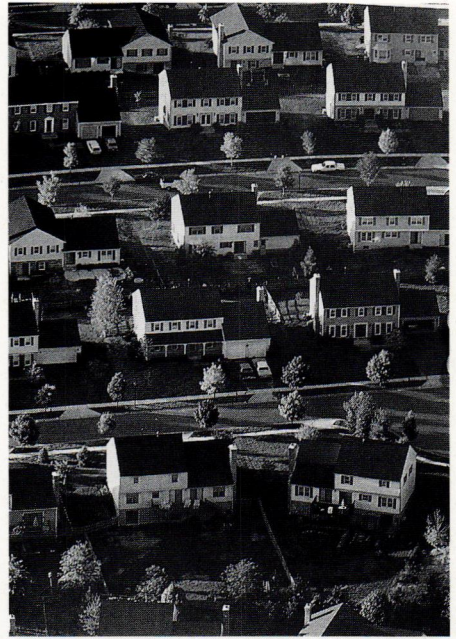
Fourth, lenders have become adverse to speculative real estate risk. This is not to say they do not like real estate. They simply will not participate in the "build and they will come" syndrome. There are still plenty of loans for: 1) companies wishing to build for their own use, 2) developers packaging lease buildings around a group of tenants, or 3) pre-sold housing projects.

Two areas of lending that have been greatly impacted by this trend are land loans and Mello-Roos District financing, two of the most important instruments for large-scale suburban projects in the 1980s. Land loans are virtually non-existent except at very low loan-to-value ratios.

Mello-Roos district formations (a primary vehicle for financing sprawl infrastructure) have dropped off dramatically for large suburban projects primarily because of the general recession. In the mean time, underwriters have become more conservative on leverage ratios, developer net-worth requirements, and the quantity of competitive product in the local market. Meanwhile, consumers have become much more wary of these "second mortgage payments." Whether these trends in lending will continue or reverse is dependent on many factors.

Fifth, in California, as in much of the United States, there is an overabundance of retail building, which is growing even more rapidly as a result of the dramatic shift to "big box" retailing. Many of the retail structures that now lie abandoned are older buildings (that were often not built well to begin with), located in mature neighborhoods that have good access to mass transit, schools, child care, and jobs.

Finally, the dialogue around air quality, transportation, neo-traditionalism and pedestrian-oriented developments has made the land-use regulators (planners and elected officials) more aware of some new ideas as well as the



Alex McLean

old "basics" of urban planning. Traditional thinking on such issues as density, parking requirements, and mixed-use have completely reversed in the last few years. Communities better understand the connections between urban form and environmental quality. There is, however, much work to be done to popularize the connection to long-term economic and social impacts, since most of the dialogue has been focused on what to do in new growth areas.

THE IMPLICATIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE CITIES

I believe that the appropriate urban vision is one that has been well articulated by many people over many years. It involves renewal, reinvestment, taking care of what you have first—the health of the greatest number of people being the first goal—all merged in a sort of zen frugality and humility. It has recently been updated by Oliver Byrum in his book *Old Problems in New Times: Urban Strategies in the 1990s*. He incorporates much about

process inclusiveness and other issues that we have learned about since the first days of urban renewal.

An interesting end result has been playfully envisioned by Richard Register in *EcoCity: Berkeley*, a vision of a city transforming itself to include more people and more open space, use fewer resources, and be approachable and friendly. This thesis has not received adequate examination by the professional community. My purpose is not to speak to that vision but merely to suggest some means to head us in the right direction.

The application of full-cost accounting, inclusion of externalities, and green economics (still groping for a name....maybe "economic reality") will continue and will have an effect upon the types of projects built. The energy utilities have come the furthest in understanding the economic implications of their decisions (witness the internally created shift from generation to conservation). City planning and real estate need to catch up.

Many cities are charging close to full cost for the capital cost of new infrastructure. But most are doing it on a community-wide averaging basis. It should be charged in proportion to the real cost in a specific location. If someone doesn't add burden to the road or storm-sewer system, they shouldn't pay for it. Furthermore, this idea of the purchase price of a commodity reflecting the complete long term cost to the community should be expanded in real estate to include governmental, environmental and social costs.

The government finance crisis and environmental and transportation laws are slowly changing this anyway, and it is an approach that a businessman can appreciate: "you pay for what you use." Corollary to this is the need for closed-loop resource systems. Some manufacturing is slowly moving towards reuse, for example, using the

same water over and over again by integrating the "cleaning" of it into the manufacturing process. In the urban realm, human biological waste, fuel generation requirements, and agriculture have a potentially symbiotic relationship. Full-cost accounting will encourage the conversion of waste (a cost) to something useful (a benefit): stick to the basics. While the self-named New Urbanism (or more appropriately, New Suburbanism) has taught many textural lessons and raised the pitch of debates around urban form, its flagship manifestations continue the exclusion of many in the community, while avoiding any connection with the essential task of reinvestment. The billions of dollars invested into real estate annually must help fix problems not exacerbate them. There are enough roads, sewers, and water systems in place to service many times the number of people who currently live in our cities. There is enough spatial segregation of the poor and the middle class.

Full-cost accounting increases the relative development costs for new growth areas allowing demand to be captured at a lower cost within the older areas. Opportunities within urban areas should be examined more thoroughly. Sites exist along transit lines in older under-utilized industrial areas, at older retail centers, and over parking in existing office parks. An excellent recent example is the Uptown Village built on the site of the old Sears store in the Hillcrest Village neighborhood overlooking downtown San Diego. Typically, development in these sites does not conflict with existing low-density residential neighborhoods. There is some design guidance available to the uninitiated. *A Pattern Language* offers many insights, as it does for most building projects. Some tips can be interpolated from Calthorpe and Associate's *TOD Guidelines*. Our office has attempted to advance the

state-of-the-art a bit with our recent *Design Guidelines for Yuba City*. There are, no doubt, many other efforts. A clear concise statement of infill principles has yet to be written, however.

These types of projects offer the greatest opportunity to maximize the positive impacts on the community, transforming and healing areas, sometimes giving the city, as a whole, one less wound to manage.

The conservative shift in real estate lending policies has resulted in a much higher percentage of projects being user-driven. That's good. A user usually has a longer economic time frame than a speculator, and is therefore more likely to have a long-term perspective, bringing their values into alignment with the community's. In the residential sector, cohousing, as a practical manifestation of intentional communities, has spawned dozens of projects across the county.

Finally, we will increasingly recognize that we're all in this together, or we will diminish, as we are now doing, together. The middle class will once again recognize that their fate is intertwined with the poor. In Neal Pierce's words, "Social issues become a question of a....society's whole strength, and its capacity to see troubled peoples not just as a social burden, but as potentially valuable human resources, waiting to become one day....assets." And he states further, "The bottom line is that one can run, but in the long run, one cannot hide from unattended urban woes."

If there is hope for California, socially or economically, for the rich or the poor, we must take every penny of our real estate economic engine and invest it in our existing communities. Government does not have the resources to come back later and fix it.

Typology as Policy

Gita Dev, FAIA

Lisa Gelfand, AIA

Susan Herrington

The last fifty years have seen the growth and decline of an important social experiment in modern architecture and public policy. Early proponents of the modern movement contended that architecture shaped social conditions; therefore, it could improve them. At the heart of this argument was housing. Today, public housing is widely perceived as having failed in its mission of providing safe and decent housing for the poor.

The public housing experiment began in the United States in 1937, when growing public concern over the social ills associated with families living in substandard housing forced Congress to enact the first national Housing Act. As a result, public housing, low-income housing owned and managed by government, was created to provide housing of "acceptable minimum standards for low-income families." In California, the history of public housing in San Francisco makes an interesting study. Due to its age and density, San Francisco offers examples of most of the important housing types that emerged nationwide in urban settings. Because these typologies reflect changes in the larger set of social and economic beliefs held by society, they provide us with a unique opportunity to view architecture's relationship to ideology. These typologies, along with recent housing experiments in San Francisco, are also discussed in order to understand the ideology underlying public housing's current attempts at change.

TYPOLGY I: LOW-RISE, LOW-DENSITY HOUSING AND THE NEW DEAL

The first government housing projects in San Francisco were post-depression, low-income worker housing built in the early forties. This housing was located on marginal lands adjacent to traditional manufacturing, transportation, and industrial employers, or in working-class neighborhoods such as the Mission and Western Addition.

Early public housing was of frugal design and expressed the "garden apartment" theme in low-rise, low-density family developments. It was primarily designed to help working families get on their feet after the Depression and make it through the war years. The new housing style departed from the traditional row-housing typology of San Francisco's urban neighborhoods. Instead of rows of houses fronting directly on streets, each with a private backyard, the units are clustered into buildings set in open space. The buildings relate freely to each other to create shared open spaces between them. The individual domestic garden is rejected in favor of landscaped areas, with low maintenance planting, that provides for communal play and social interaction. Most of this housing is thoughtfully located near parks and playgrounds.

The grassy expanses with plain, but decent, uniform dwelling units objectifies New Deal ideology of government relief. FHA layout guidelines presented with numerous diagrams in *Architectural Record*, stress that public

housing should be decidedly different and independent from the surrounding city. Architects should "prevent buildings from depending on adjacent properties for their views, light, and air" by designing "self-contained units independent of exterior forces." Even the suggested street layout reflects this independence from the unknown forces of the city as "curved, dead-end or off-set streets through the site are preferred to continuations of adjoining thoroughfares." The guidelines reflect the confidence of a proactive government setting out to create an improved new model for future private housing development.

The first development, Holly Court, designed in 1940 by architect Arthur Brown Jr., shows the beginnings of this new typology. With a density close to that of the surrounding neighborhood, its carefully arranged open spaces still allow some buildings to front on the street which makes it fit well in the neighborhood. Within the site, units create a hierarchy of private and shared spaces. This has encouraged a tradition of gardening that individualizes the units. Holly Court remains a sought-after development, despite the fact that it is San Francisco's oldest.

In Sunnyside, San Francisco's third development, the typology is sharpened and clarified. Rows of barracks-like buildings sprawl casually up a hillside, most facing each other rather than the street. Sunnyside has sixteen units per acre, so open space flows around the buildings. Designed in 1939 by Albert F. Roller and Roland I. Stringham Architects, with landscape architect Thomas Church, its low density and open spaces contrast sharply with the urban grid that has grown up around it.

TYPOLOGY II : HIGH-RISE, HIGH-DENSITY HOUSING AND THE COLD WAR

A different kind of pressure was clearly at work in the housing plans of the fif-

ties. The influx of war-time workers who stayed on, as well as returning GIs, swelled urban populations, and by the mid-fifties, higher-density public housing was becoming a policy priority. Bernal Dwellings in the Mission signals the turning point in public housing typology that took place after World War II. Plans developed before the war by architect William Gladstone Merchant called for the typical low-rise concrete buildings to house an estimated six hundred persons. These plans were shelved until after the war, but in 1951, the regional Public Housing Administration refused approval of this plan because the cost-per-room was now considered unacceptably high.

In tandem with these pressures, the city, with its deteriorating 19th Century housing stock, was increasingly presented as unsafe, unhealthy, and a breeding ground for crime and juvenile delinquency. As government promoted the private world of the suburbs to the middle class with tax incentives, GI loans, and extensive infrastructure programs, a perception was growing that the hearts of the major cities of the world's leading democracy were riddled with poverty. Big plans were set in motion to remedy this under the aegis of slum clearance.

In 1952, the Redevelopment Agency designated an entire twenty-six-block neighborhood, the Western Addition area of San Francisco, as a "blighted area." A master plan for the area, by architects Vernon de Mars and Albert Roller, shows the Victorian neighborhood replaced with modern low- and mid-rise housing and commercial high-rise towers along a widened boulevard corridor. That same year, the *Chronicle* explains that displaced residents probably cannot afford the new housing because "the private builders must take a profit....that's why it is necessary for the Housing Authority to build and operate low

rent housing.” The public housing was accumulated into three sites with high-density high-rises of about seventy units per acre. Nearly one thousand public housing units were built in three high rises: Yerba Buena Plaza East, Yerba Buena Plaza West, and Yerba Buena Plaza Annex. Designed by Ambrose and Spencer, all three tower over the low-rise fabric of the new neighborhood, and at double or triple the neighborhood density, they freed up surrounding blocks for private development.

This was at the height of utopian Corbusian thinking, when technology and architecture would save the world. Corbusier saw all of Paris rebuilt as towers in a park. Triumphant modern movement designers would provide “machines for living,” efficient, high-density housing in towers with lots of light and air, saving the ground plan for communal amenities in well-designed park-like settings.

Where modern movement architects in San Francisco envisioned public housing as an opportunity to prove the superiority of modern design, the government saw these emblems of modern ingenuity as concrete examples of the idea that capitalism will provide for everybody. In order to conceal its overtly socialist roots, cold war public housing needed to appear in alignment with the capitalist system and was heavily promoted in terms of its financial, social and aesthetic benefits to the public.

From our vantage point in the 1990s, the confidence and enthusiasm of the architects and designers of this period is, to say the least, discomforting. These very high-rise buildings became known, in one generation, as the most terrifyingly dysfunctional housing environments in San Francisco. With nicknames such as the “Pink Palace” (Yerba Buena Plaza Annex) and “Heartbreak Hotel” (Plaza East), they became notorious for life-threatening

crime, inhuman physical conditions and a level of misery that would have been hard to imagine in 1953.

A STATE OF CRISIS

Despite early warnings such as Jane Jacob’s *Death and Life of Great American Cities* (1961), the dramatic dynamiting of the Pruitt-Igoe housing towers in St. Louis in 1972 was the first concrete admission that this social experiment was truly a failure. This questioning of technology and progress profoundly affected society. Architecture had been sold as a means to achieve utopia, especially in the case of public housing. Its failure represented a crisis in both architecture and our vision for creating a better future.

The period from the seventies to the eighties was one of doubt and government retreat. Early attempts to rehabilitate the low-rise, low-density, garden-apartment housing simply consisted of refurbishing the buildings and grounds. These developments, however, soon deteriorated and reverted to their neglected, gaunt, graffitied condition.

Both typologies were widely perceived as unsuccessful in providing safe and decent housing for the poor. Most high-rise family developments were thought to be much more dangerous than the surrounding neighborhoods; residents were stigmatized as causing the crime that victimizes them and their neighbors, and were considered responsible for their own misery. The low-rise “garden” developments, in their turn, were suffering severely from a lack of control of their extensive open spaces which acted as magnets for a variety of illegal and dangerous activities. Local residents began to fiercely resist new public housing. By 1971, legislation required local approval for any new public housing built in the state of California. Planning for low-income families

at new locations in the city was greatly hindered by this law and housing policy focused on reviving and adapting existing family housing stock.

THE 1980s AND 1990s: A PERIOD OF EXPERIMENTATION

In San Francisco, the Housing Authority and architects began looking for new solutions to revitalize its different types of aging and deteriorating public housing structures. The wide range of solutions experimented with in San Francisco can be defined by four different strategies:

- Privatization of the exterior shared spaces of the first typology—garden apartments,
- Adaptive reuse of the high-rise typology for senior housing,
- Demolition of the high-rise typology and replacement with faux private housing,
- Growth in non-profit developers who focused largely on housing for people with special needs, such as seniors.

PRIVATIZATION OF THE EXTERIOR SHARED SPACES OF THE FIRST TYPOLOGY—GARDEN APARTMENTS

HUNTERS POINT UPPER EAST

At a couple of sites at Hunters Point, Marquis Associates architects were able to rework the site layout to more closely approximate the traditional defensible spaces of the urban row house typology of the neighborhood. This familiar typology orients front doors and windows directly to the street, extends and delineates the territorial control of this frontage through residential front yards, and maintains a secure backyard with a high degree of privacy. In the context of the existing garden-apartment layout, these characteristics were applied to public access ways through the site as well as the street. Where

these strategies were applied, rehabilitation was successful and remains intact. Other projects that were modernized at the same time deteriorated rapidly. It slowly became clear that rehabilitation was going to be successful to the extent that the typology of these low-rise developments could be altered and the site design made more defensible.

SUNNYDALE HOUSING

Currently, this strategy is being considered for Sunnydale Housing, San Francisco's largest and most severely troubled development. The wide open spaces of this low-density development present its greatest problems, as they have become a magnet for a variety of criminal activities. The most important single feature of the redesign, by architects Marquis Associates and associated architects Powell & Partners, will be to recapture and restructure all the open space to establish a clear hierarchy of territorial control.

ADAPTIVE REUSE OF THE HIGH-RISE TYPOLOGY FOR SENIOR HOUSING

ROSA PARKS SENIOR APARTMENTS

Partly abandoned and boarded up, the notorious "Pink Palace" was the first high-rise up for rehabilitation. It was being compared to Pruitt-Igde and slated for demolition when Mayor Diane Feinstein decided that it should be converted to high-rise senior housing, a building type that was reasonably successful in urban areas. The conversion was so successful that it immediately became a nationwide model for saving failed high-rise housing stock.

Central to Rosa Parks' great success is that the architects, Marquis Associates, working with sociologist Clare Cooper Marcus, treated the circulation elements of a high-rise with the typology of an urban neighbor-

hood; the cold, windy, open balcony corridors were closed in and treated as "streets." The front door of each unit was treated as a front porch, and kitchen windows look out on the "streets" with window boxes for plants and other personal touches. The informal surveillance of activity typical in urban areas was used in a variety of ways to draw residents into vicarious participation. Where elevators once opened to a parking lot, a very popular lobby now provides informal surveillance of the main entry. Mailboxes, laundries, sun rooms, and garden planter beds all provide opportunities for active or passive participation in the activities of a community. After ten years, Rosa Parks is considered a successful adaptation of the second typology.

DEMOLITION OF THE HIGH-RISE TYPOLOGY AND REPLACEMENT WITH FAUX PRIVATE HOUSING

PITTS PLAZA

Before the decision was made to demolish towering Yerba Buena West, the Housing Authority conducted extensive studies, with resident participation, on whether it could be remodeled to work better as family housing.

Eight years after those studies, the Plaza West high-rise has been demolished and in its place stands low-rise, Victorian-revival Pitts Plaza. The replacement is another step toward the now-emerging themes of "individualism" and "privatization." With each flat's private front door facing directly onto the street or onto a parking lot right off the street, shared circulation is eliminated. The typology attempts to approximate the elements of the typical urban residential block. Almost all exterior space is private; ground floor units have small front and rear yards. The only exception is a shared mid-block playground, which is accessed

through the units or through a shared community building. Designed by Community Design Cooperative with ED2, both of Berkeley, the architectural style is a conscious effort to relate to the remaining Victorian housing stock of the old Western Addition, suggesting full retreat from the notion that public housing could be the vanguard of a brave new architecture soon to be adopted by everyone else.

PLAZA EAST AND BERNAL DWELLINGS

The San Francisco Housing Authority recently competed nationwide with the nation's forty largest cities and won demonstration grants to replace two other family high-rise with similar new low-rise walk-ups. In the proposal for Plaza East, designed by Housing Authority architect Lisa Gelfand, and in the proposal for Bernal Dwellings, townhouses will replace the larger flats, carrying the row-house typology further, and shared outdoor spaces will be entirely eliminated in favor of individual private backyards. The style will be consciously contextual and, ideally, the housing will blend into the fabric of the neighborhood. In contrast to Pitts Plaza, there will be no compromise of rear yard privacy. Shared space will be entirely eliminated. This led one resident of the highly interactive design process to conclude that the "projects" would finally be gone.

HAYES VALLEY HOUSING

In a radical move, Hayes Valley Housing, a low-rise but high-density development with particularly serious physical and social distress, is up for an innovative private-sector partnership, in which the present structures will be demolished and rebuilt by a private developer using Section 8 project-based certificates.

Architects Backen, Arrigoni & Ross have designed a street-fronting townhouse and flat development simi-

lar to the new Plaza East. However, this development will go beyond architecture in its efforts to blend with the surrounding city. The families will have incomes across the whole range of public housing eligibility tenants (up to 80 percent of the median income) and density will more nearly resemble the neighborhood. Above all, the Section 8 program will provide a subsidy per unit that is about twice public housing unit subsidies.

DEVELOPMENT OF NON-PROFIT SPECIAL INTEREST HOUSING

It is significant to note that in the last decade, as support for public housing has decreased, support for private initiative in low-income housing has grown. This has been accomplished by a variety of subsidy programs, including low-interest loans, tax credits, grants, and increased rent subsidies. The groups providing this housing range from large development companies to small non-profit neighborhood groups. These private initiative groups have favored providing for people with special needs, especially seniors. In the Bay Area, this includes housing for the physically or mentally disabled, SROs, drug rehabilitation shelters, AIDS housing, housing for single mothers and battered women, teen havens, runaway shelters, and homeless shelters. People with these special needs account for about 40 percent of public housing residents.

CURRENT TRENDS: PURSUING AN IDEOLOGY OF ILLUSIONS

Examining the strategies of low-income family housing, we see architects in search of a new ideology to replace the discredited socialistic bent of previous public housing typologies. The most striking single feature of these experiments is a shift towards ideals that can

generally be characterized as a belief in the values of "individualism": individual control, privacy and even private ownership, private enterprise, and self-government. In all cases, privatization, whether in terms of actual ownership or the look of private ownership, is key to justifying change.

Therefore, the illusionary aspects of faux private housing are interesting. Public housing directly engages the intentions of government. Exercising one's right to privacy is one of the ultimate acts of individualism. Details which give private housing its look of individuality contribute in substantive ways to more successful neighborhoods. Approachable scale, variety, richness of detail, and clear statements of territory all contribute to a resident's sense of control, whether they are tenants or owners.

Modern architecture in the public housing of the first four decades certainly offered no fantasy. Not only were the Victorian embellishments intellectualized away in these early typologies, but the building types themselves stood out in the city as being systems for storing the less fortunate masses.

The importance of illusion to the market-place is significant, as it makes undesirable uses disappear in the context of urban life. A study of recent low-income housing reveals that the use of imagery that blends into the neighborhood context, even when the actual typology is in direct opposition to the imagery projected, is crucial for community acceptance.

As an example, Delancey Street Housing, a residential drug rehabilitation and ex-offender facility designed by Backan Arrigoni & Ross, appears to passersby to be traditional mixed-use row housing with ground floor retail space and apartments above. Once again, we see architecture reflecting society's values.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS: WHERE ARE WE HEADED?

The San Francisco Housing Authority is moving towards a public housing stock that mimics the typology of private housing. This is a very flexible unit type because, appropriately configured, the house will accommodate a traditional nuclear family with young kids or young adults, a single-parent family, an extended or multi-generation family, a group of individuals in shared housing, or even a room-subletting arrangement to augment income.

However, even as evidence supporting the appropriateness of this kind of housing grows, some experiments begun by residents of public housing using the shared, open spaces in their developments are worth noting. At Alemany Development, residents have enlisted the aid of the San Francisco League of Urban Gardeners (SLUG) in creating an economic development program based on a market garden, only possible because of the massive amounts of unclaimed space available. This sort of initiative is truly promising. A tightly planned urban development of faux private housing does not automatically yield space for group initiatives. In urban neighborhoods that work well, there exists a rich and balanced mixture of private, semi-private, and shared social spaces. When design compromises these spaces, a feeling of community is often missing.

With initiatives that empower individuals and develop community in mind, architects cannot merely apply the private-housing typology to public housing. They need to look at the part of architecture that is not a type. Real solutions lie in the particulars of the city block, the building's interface with the street, and the behavior of human beings. Installing front porches at the entrance to buildings on a four lane arterial street will have a completely dif-

ferent effect than installing them on buildings located on a small side street. The wealth of behavioral science studies concerning the social nature of front yards, porches, sidewalks, and streets, as well as the artistry required to evoke a feeling of home, must be drawn upon to create a viable architecture for the new public housing.

Additionally, if private initiative is to be increasingly successful in providing for low-income housing and affordable housing for people with special needs, public housing policy has to be directed to families. Yet the public housing federal preference list and fifty years of public policy emphasize housing individuals who may not be best served by autonomous housing. An examination of the demographics of San Francisco's current public housing shows that 50 percent are families, about 90 percent of which are single parent households. An additional 20 percent are seniors, and 20 percent people with disabilities of various types, including drug dependencies. A large segment of the residents in public housing need social services. Of the families that are housed in public housing a very large group are single teenage and young mothers. These children with children have special needs. So do the young men without their families. If public housing is to be successful, the lack of funding for services needs to be confronted and this faux private typology must be examined in light of these needs.

Amid the after-shocks of fifty years of failed public-housing promises, the development of this new typology is more tenuous than its predecessors. Yet resident input, public housing policy, and city officials are all moving to support the faux private housing typology. With ideology and typology once again moving into alignment, we now see architects moving forward with renewed confidence into the next millennium.

Evolving Communities: Small Dream Proposals for Los Angeles

Allyne Winderman, AIA

This is the story of two adjacent but very different communities in downtown Los Angeles and how they have changed over time. The communities are Little Tokyo, located two blocks east of City Hall, and Skid Row, a fifty-block area to the south of Little Tokyo. Each community began quite organically, located close to the center of the original Pueblo of Los Angeles. Over time, each area grew, changed, and deteriorated. In both cases, the tool of redevelopment was brought in as a solution and plans were drawn. The bold and simple solutions of the seventies, however, did not stand up to reality. Almost from the beginning, plans began to evolve, responding to both changing times and changing communities. When considering paradigms in planning for the next half century, we must understand that while big projects and new ways of thinking are important, small persistent change is critical to making dreams a reality.

Therefore, this story tells the history of each place; the problems that led to the decision to adopt redevelopment plans for each area; traditional approaches to planning that were employed; and small projects that are now underway to transform the community.

BUILDING A COMMUNITY IN SKID ROW: IT'S NOT JUST HOUSING ANYMORE

In the early days of Los Angeles, the area later to be called "Skid Row" was agricultural land and orange orchards. The famous Ord Survey of 1849 shows the area east of Main Street as

"ploughed ground, corn, and gardens." The growth of the city to the south of the original settlement plaza area after the end of the Mexican period (in 1847) and the emergence of the railroads after the 1860s changed the character of the Skid Row area. The rail lines brought business to the area, including warehouses, industries, hotels, rooming houses and associated commercial shops.

By the 1920s, conditions in the area began to deteriorate. The number of permanent residents increased while the number and quality of community businesses decreased. The Depression exacerbated these trends. Missions were established in the area, including the Union Rescue Mission, Los Angeles Mission, and Midnight Mission, all of which still exist today. After World War II, the area's decline continued, as was evidenced by a City Building Code enforcement campaign in the late



"Plan de la Ciudad de Los Angeles," Ord Survey Map, 1849. Courtesy, Huntington Library.

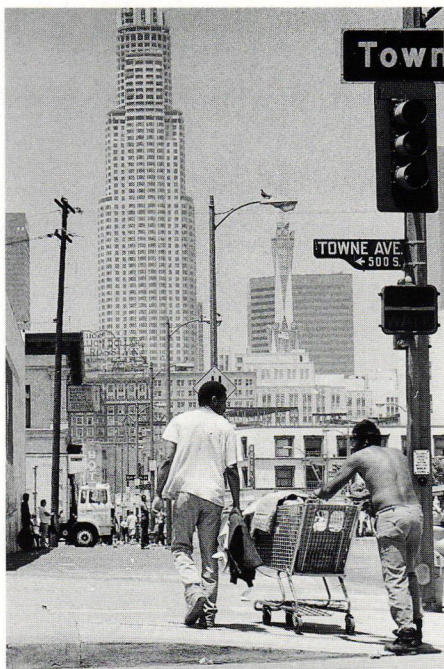
1950s, which demolished 5,500 hotels rooms and apartments.

In 1975, the city adopted the Central Business District Redevelopment Plan, which included the Skid Row area. Planning documents for this area stated, with the optimism of the time, that “solving the Skid Row problem” was essential to the success of the plan. Problems at the time were alcoholism, a proliferation of bars and adult entertainment facilities, vagrancy, and homelessness. Solutions included a major alcohol detoxification facility, and a master-planned area that called for a university, library, opera house, and retail shops, all linked to the rest of the city through a light rail line.

The evolution of the area has not followed the plan, however. Problems have changed but persisted. Some businesses have stayed in the area, others have left and new industries have come to take their place. Although most of the bars, liquor stores, and X-rated theaters are gone, new problems have taken their place, including the introduction of crack cocaine and the deinstitutionalization of the mentally ill.

The area today is an unusual sort of mixed-use neighborhood. Local industries generate billions of dollars in business per year and employ thousands of people, many in low skill and entry level jobs. Businesses in the area include the seafood and produce industries, food processing plants, toy importers, general merchandise and electronics, a wholesale flower mart, printing companies, and garment wholesaling and manufacturing enterprises.

There are approximately ten thousand people living in the area, in approximately six thousand single-room-occupancy (SRO) hotel rooms, and two thousand shelter and transitional beds. It is estimated that one thousand people sleep on the streets of Skid Row each night. The area also includes nearly sixty human services organizations,



“Skid Row” district, downtown Los Angeles.
Courtesy, Community Redevelopment Agency.

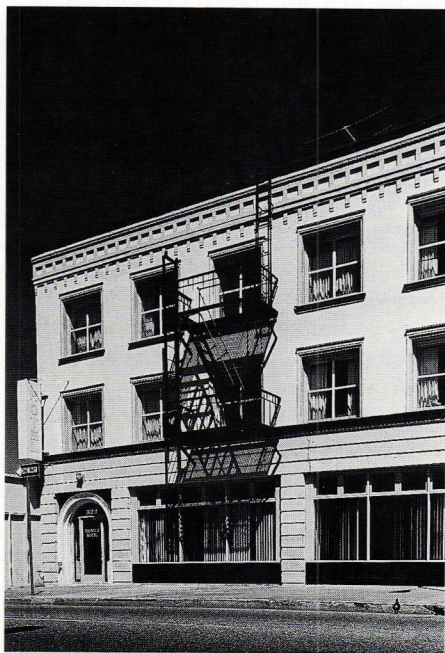
which provide everything from basic food and shelter to programs for mental health, veterans’ services, substance abuse, and job training.

Over time, planning agendas for the area have changed. Unlike many other cities that have tried to bulldoze their Skid Rows, Los Angeles planners determined that the best course was to improve the area and the lives of the people living there. The city realized that the SRO housing stock was a valuable low-income housing resource that was endangered, both by its physical deterioration and by economic pressures to convert it to other uses.

The city, through the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) has undertaken a massive effort to preserve, rehabilitate, and place under non-profit ownership and management, fully half of the area’s SRO housing stock. Additionally, since 1987, Los Angeles has had a moratorium on the demolition of SRO hotels.

Nevertheless, the problems of Skid Row go far beyond housing. Approximately three-quarters of the homeless population suffers from chronic mental illness, substance abuse, or both. The median household income in the area is 30 percent of that of the city as a whole. Area residents suffer from physical illness more often than their citywide counterparts, and are disconnected from their friends and families. The needs of the population are complex and varied.

To address this myriad of issues, the city has looked at the existing clustering of SRO housing as the seeds of small neighborhoods, and has worked to create elements of community in these areas. Two small parks have been developed, one at Fifth and San Julian Streets and one at Sixth and Gladys Streets. They are the sites of daily neighborhood activities as well as seasonal events, such as Christmas parties and election campaigns. Within the



Newly rehabilitated Harold Hotel (SRO).
Courtesy, Community Redevelopment Agency.

housing clusters, some hotels have been designated as special-needs housing for the mentally ill or substance abusers.

A branch YMCA has been established in one of the hotels. Other neighborhood services include: job-readiness training and job placement; public toilets, showers, and laundromat; a non-profit market; homeless outreach programs; and a drop-in center with a library reading room with books and furniture donated by the Los Angeles Public Library.

Nevertheless, there are still hundreds of people sleeping on the streets in Skid Row each night, drugs are used and sold openly on the streets, and human waste is found in alleys and doorways throughout the area. Because of this, tensions between businesses, social services, and non-profit housing providers are running high.

The greatest challenge is to reach those people who are not utilizing the resources. Recent studies show unexpectedly high vacancy rates in both SRO hotels and some shelter programs. Through outreach, discussions, and surveys of homeless people and those who work with the homeless, the city is trying to understand and break down the barriers that prevent people from receiving services.

Many people find the stringent rules and high expectations established by some social service providers too difficult to accept. Others fear shelters or dislike the lack of privacy and personal freedom that is imposed by some missions and shelters. With funding that will be provided through the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), programs and facilities are being developed to break down the barriers and fill the missing gaps in the delivery of services to the homeless. Most important for this area are additional outreach workers for the homeless, an information and referral facil-

ity, and a “low demand” drop-in center where people can get off the streets without changing their lifestyle. All of these services will be designed to make the first step out of homelessness as welcoming and supportive as possible.

LITTLE TOKYO: PLANNING FOR THE NEXT GENERATION

Little Tokyo has been the heart of L.A.’s Japanese-American community since its founding around 1885, when a sailor named Kame jumped ship and opened a restaurant near the corner of what is now First and San Pedro Streets.

In 1903, the first issue of *Rafu Shimpō*, a Japanese-English newspaper, was published, and Fugetsudo, a Japanese confectionery, was opened on Weller Street. Both of these enterprises are still operating today: Fugetsudo, now located on First Street, is currently run by Brian Kito, grandson of one of the original owners.

The population of the area grew rapidly after the turn of the century. There were over four thousand Japanese in Los Angeles at the time of the 1910 census. By that time, businesses in the area included restaurants, barber shops, jewelers, and banks. Little Tokyo soon became the home of Japanese religious institutions. In 1917 and 1918 respectively, the Nishi Hongwanji Temple and Union Church were founded through mergers of smaller congregations.

Anti-Japanese sentiment was always a fact of life in Little Tokyo, as evidenced by agreements and laws that limited the immigration of laborers: they were ineligible for citizenship and prohibited from owning land or leasing it for more than three years. Finally, in 1924, the United States government halted all immigration from Japan.

Even with the end of immigration in the 1920s, Little Tokyo developed



Produce warehouse. Courtesy, Community Redevelopment Agency.

into a thriving community, and the period from 1924 to 1941 is seen as the heyday of Little Tokyo. Almost all of the thirty-five thousand Japanese who lived in Los Angeles lived within a three-mile radius of the corner of First and San Pedro Streets, and the area became a bustling center of business and entertainment.

The coming of the Second World War signaled the end of that era. After the bombing of Pearl Harbor, the FBI rounded up community leaders, and many of the Little Tokyo shops were forced to close down. Executive Order 9066, signed by Franklin Delano Roosevelt in 1942, forced the relocation of persons of Japanese ancestry to detention camps in the interior of the country. Little Tokyo was deserted.

During wartime, many African-Americans came to Los Angeles searching for jobs and were forced by housing discrimination to settle in Little Tokyo. This area was called “Bronzeville” by locals when African-Americans opened cafes and restaurants.

In the spring of 1945, Japanese internees were allowed to return to the Pacific Coast. Some returned to Little Tokyo to try to pick up their former lives, but others did not return to the old neighborhood. During the 1950s, the Japanese-American population became more decentralized, moving to communities such as Gardena, Monterey Park and Baldwin Hills. By the 1960s, many of the buildings in Little Tokyo were showing signs of decay. Community leaders and merchants began discussing the possibility of redeveloping and revitalizing Little Tokyo.

In 1970, the Little Tokyo Redevelopment Project was established. This traditional "urban renewal" project proposed demolition of the old buildings in the area and starting over again. However, as new construction progressed, the residents, business owners, and friends of Little Tokyo realized that the history of the Japanese-American people of Los Angeles was told by the historic buildings in the area, and that they were in danger of losing that history along with the buildings. They organized themselves to save as much of the area as possible, and in 1986, the block along First Street from San Pedro Street to Central Avenue was declared a National Register Historic District: rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of the buildings began. A matching grant program was established for façade improvements. Low interest loans were provided for the rehabilitation of buildings in the district, many of which had SRO hotels on their upper floors. Since the established religious institutions had moved into modern facilities, the old Nishi Hongwanji Temple was rehabilitated and adaptively reused as the Japanese American National Museum. And the Union Church will soon be home to the East-West Players theater group, LA Artcore, and Visual Communications archives and research center.



Little Tokyo street performance. Courtesy, Community Redevelopment Agency.

At the same time, plans were being made for the development of the rest of Little Tokyo. At the height of the expansion of the 1980s land was cleared to make way for developments that included hotels, condominiums, and office buildings. Then the recession hit Los Angeles. Most of the proposals are still operative, but while waiting for the economy to turn around, the community is using this time as an occasion for reflection on the direction of Little Tokyo and its meaning for Japanese-Americans in Los Angeles. How can the area retain its importance to the Japanese-American community when so many of the services that had been unique to Little Tokyo have moved, with the population, out to the suburbs? How does it retain memory of life in the United States while welcoming the influx of Japanese immigrants and tourists? How does this place which carries so much of the history of a people remain vital for the next generation?

To help answer these questions, an "opportunities inventory" was undertaken. At the initiative of the CRA planning was carried out by seven different charrette teams, with over fifty people from the community offering their visions, large and small, for the future of Little Tokyo. The teams included older, venerable professionals; artists from the loft district; young third- and fourth-generation Japanese-

Americans; developers; and others interested in the future of Little Tokyo.

While each team brought their unique ideas and outlook to the planning process, certain themes and strategies emerged as constants between all the groups. The teams discovered that Little Tokyo is very near other vibrant areas, yet it remains isolated. They looked for ways that the area could connect to nearby neighborhoods, including the Civic Center, Historic Core, Toy District, and Artists' Loft area. Proposals included extending the street system to break up the area's superblocks, developing a bridge over Alameda Street to link with the artists' district, and planting a Japanese garden in a thin strip along the block between Little Tokyo and the Civic Center.

Connections were important within Little Tokyo as well. A "river of iris" garden was proposed for a left-over railroad spur that carves a curved path through Little Tokyo. Others pro-

posed that apprentice craftspersons who study under "cultural living treasures" could sell their wares along this "river." Mini-buses or tram lines could connect the far reaches of the area continuing the garden theme.

Naturally, all agreed that Little Tokyo should underscore its uniqueness both as an authentic ethnic community, and as a repository for contemporary Japanese culture and commerce. This idea produced many interesting proposals, including giant warring "Godzilla" and "Mothra" who would fight at night with laser beams to entertain visitors and modern "torii" gateways of slender red poles at the four main intersections of Little Tokyo.

Gardens and streetscaping ideas were seen as important for both the long and short term. A street tree-planting project was proposed to be undertaken immediately to improve the public realm of Little Tokyo even as private development was stalled. Parking lots were seen as opportunity sites for mini-gardens that would be planted by Little Tokyo's many garden clubs. A proposed farmers' market would attract downtown office workers, Little Tokyo residents and visitors, and residents of nearby communities. The scale of Little Tokyo was deemed an important characteristic of the area and a number of proposals sought to reinforce this scale by narrowing existing streets through medians or other means. Housing was seen as a priority of the community, with low-and mid-rise housing to be constructed as soon as possible.

Major projects proposed included a gymnasium for basketball and martial arts, a Japanese Products Center, an aquarium and oceanography museum featuring sea creatures of the Pacific, and a Japanese Training Institute teaching Japanese management, manufacturing, and servicing techniques. The teams are now working on strategies to implement these ideas.



Japanese American National Museum. Courtesy, Community Redevelopment Agency.

The Euphemism of Managed Growth

Claude Gruen

Above-average monopoly profits provide good real-estate investment returns. But a property's ability to withstand competitive pressures that reduce rents or value is only one requisite to earning monopoly profits. Even a monopoly cannot earn monopoly profits in the face of failing demand.

When demand for housing was driven down by the recession that hit southern California particularly hard, residential prices fell even in those communities that had limited housing production. Similarly, office rents declined when the San Francisco economy faltered—in spite of that city's tough cap on the building of new office space. Investors should not have been surprised by these and other declines in the returns from properties protected by significant barriers to entry.

The lesson that even a monopolist needs strong demand should not be forgotten, because the real-estate recovery will be very uneven. Products and locations with unique market appeal will be necessary for high returns, yet often will not guarantee them. Another requisite will be location in areas that sustain economic growth in a competitive world. Often policies that limit real-estate development and, therefore, grant monopolies to existing properties also cripple the economic vitality of the area.

Regions that will grow in the future either will have to provide good environments for cost-competitive production and innovation or have the ability to attract tourists. The best

growth will be in regions with relatively low living costs, knowledge-based activities that spur innovation, and exciting attractions. Without at least one of these features, demand will be weak. Policies that limit some form of development, usually residential building, tend to drive up costs which discourages the expansion of all activities including innovative ones.

The downtowns that nurture growing demand will have exciting cultural and sports activities in an environment that can attract visitors and maintain service firms. Monopoly-bestowing, growth-limiting policies do not tend to grow or preserve such downtowns.

The economies of suburban communities are much more likely to be stunted by growth caps than to be spurred on to become edge cities. The development and viability of activities with the ability to attract local dollars and export requires a growing and diverse local population base. Managing growth is often merely a euphemism for precluding diversity and minimizing the size of the local labor and consumer base.

Local policies that directly grant monopolies to property owners in the short run may indirectly be depriving them of adequate returns in the long run. Policies that hurt economic growth raise no profits—not even those of monopolists.

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Los Proximos Cincuenta Años

Manuel E. Perez, AIA

If you can't read the title of this article (which translates as "The Next Fifty Years"), you may have problems living in the California of the future. Ready or not, California is undergoing tremendous demographic changes. However, the key issue we face does not consist of immigration policy, despite its popularity among the voting minority. The issue is cultural change—a change that finds those who are "governed" to be decidedly different in culture, language, and ethnicity from those who "govern."

The most popular radio station in Southern California (the number one radio market in the United States) does not play "Top 40s," "Country and Western," or "Classics"—it plays "Banda," a musical import from Northern Mexico.¹ The languages spoken today in the "downtowns" of California are usually not Northern or Eastern European, but Spanish and Cantonese with vestiges of Vietnamese, Tagalog, Khmer, Hmong frequently heard. Supermarkets now feature Basmati Rice, Bok Choy, Chorizo, and other locally produced delicacies to meet the changing demands of their customers.

Cultural change in California is an ongoing process. However, our governing institutions have had difficulty adjusting to these changes. The role and responsibility of professional architects, planners, and urban designers should be to serve the changing needs of the broader community. As Edward Hall demonstrated in *The Hidden Dimension*, "There are two European systems for patterning space. One of these, the

radiating star, which occurs in France and Spain, is sociopetal (brings people together). The other, the grid, originated in Asia Minor, adopted by the Romans and carried to England at the time of Caesar is sociofugal (spreads people apart). Both systems have advantages, but a person familiar with one has difficulty using the other."²

City planning in California is based upon traditional models developed by and for Europeans. The prototype of our shopping malls is based on Milan's Galleria. The so-called "plazas" usually overshadowed by vast buildings are modern, if weak, versions of the public markets found throughout Spain and Latin America.

The ubiquitous suburban front lawn, also known as the "L.A. Greenbelt" derives from the Crofter cottage of England. Contemporary urban design attempts to create "places" in this fabric by "emoting the feel" of gathering places popular in Southern Europe. However, these "archetypes" will not be enough for us to deal with the changes in the population of California. Much of our work will require that we communicate with, and understand, the aspirations of different cultures.

As the California Department of Finance has noted: "Many population landmarks will be reached in California during the coming half century. California will have no race/ethnic majority group by 2002. The state's population will surpass 40 million in 2006. By 2020, Hispanics will become the largest race/ethnic group in the state."³ Given that scenario, what should we be

prepared to cope with in future urban planning and design?

Psychologists and sociologists are aware that an individual's perception of space is determined, in great part, by the culture in which he or she is raised.⁴ Yet, individuals are able to modify their perception of space. As architects and urban designers we have learned to "see" space through the eyes of our clients and users. As planners, urban designers, and architects our challenge in the near future is to rapidly adapt our professional training and expertise to see and evaluate form and its function through the eyes of new and different users.

Critically important to Hispanic and Asian communities are the "public open spaces" where social and commercial interaction takes place. While public parks may be widely used, they lack the commercial activity that makes the family's shopping "outing" an important part of the week.

Much of Latin America and a portion of Asia lie within the tropics. Much of California enjoys subtropical weather. It is not surprising, in this benign climate, that outdoor public spaces are important meeting places. Instant "city center" theme parks such as Disney and Universal City Walk—while bursting at the seams with people eager for outings—do not fulfill this function, as you have to pay to get in.⁵ True Plazas are public "al fresco" places that provide social and commercial interaction.

Current students of cities note that rather than becoming ghost towns, as we once feared they might, downtowns are enjoying a lively resurgence and becoming more ethnic in their character. Part of their renaissance may be due to the availability of space and supportive infrastructure. It is definitely not due to cheap rents. Rents on South Broadway in Los Angeles exceed those on exclusive Rodeo Drive in Beverly Hills.

Architects, planners, and urban designers have the opportunity to participate in designing for the changing population, or, we can ignore the changes around us and continue to be less involved. If we are to be involved with the diverse cultures and societies we must learn respect and understanding for other ways of "seeing" our built environment. Let us take heed of a Spanish saying, popularized during the sixties "¡si se puede!"—"yes it can be done!"

NOTES

1. "¡Buenos Diiiiiiiias, Los Annnnnngeles!," Claudia Puig, *Los Angeles Times Magazine*, 12 June 1994.
2. Edward T. Hall, *The Hidden Dimension* (Garden City, N.Y.: Double Day & Company, Inc., 1966), 146.
3. California Department of Finance, *Population Projections*, 1993.
4. Edward T. Hall, *The Silent Language* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1959).
5. Charles W. Moore, "You Have to Pay for the Public Life" in *Dimensions: Space, Shape, and Scale in Architecture* (New York: Architectural Record Books, 1976), 105-130.

A Virtual Reality

Michael Pittas

The drive from Pacific Palisades via Sunset to the 405 and east on the Santa Monica Freeway is unremarkable except for the fact that there are fewer and fewer cars on the road every day. Joan Baker remembers how just a few short years ago the same trip at six in the morning would take twice the time. Joan, a sales rep for a global technology corporation headquartered in Los Angeles is going to her once-every-other-week visit to her downtown office. "Her office." It sounds funny these days—after all she hasn't had a dedicated office space for several years.

For the most part she works out of her home, at her clients' spaces, in her favorite coffee bars, or in the car—almost any place except downtown. Her networked laptop micro-computer with its fax/modem, scanner and printer, E-mail and Internet link are all the technology she needs to accomplish her work. In fact since she started with the company in 1994 her productivity has gone up more than 38 percent. It is ironic that she can now do the work of a copy operator, receptionist, secretary, stenographer, researcher, printer, photographer, publisher, postal worker, and half a dozen other jobs that have evaporated over the past fifteen or twenty years.

She remembers her anxiety when in 1995 her company announced cuts of another 15,000 workers. That year, over 65,000 more workers were permanently "downsized" and "re-engineered" out of their jobs in North America. Joan was content to have survived the massacre. She and her telecommuting husband Max care for

their two boys, now teenagers, more directly. School events, sports, and field trips, once beyond their office-bound lifestyle, are now regular events in their lives. This rare day at the downtown office is very important to Joan. It is at these sales, training, and marketing meetings that she gets a first-hand look at her competition among sales reps. It is also here that she can press her case for promotion. In some ways corporate culture hasn't changed much, you still have to butter-up superiors and trip-up the competition—but you only have two days a month face-to-face in which to do it. This day is going to be intense.

As she passes the La Brea exit, Joan sees the downtown L.A. skyline back-lit in the morning haze. How amazing, she thinks, almost nothing has changed since '94 except the smog. Virtually no new structure has been added to the skyline; very few are missing. Remarkable because the last fifteen years have seen a rapid growth of white collar information workers. Understandable when she remembers that very few of these central business district office workers still work downtown. In 1994, Joan wasn't part of the 6 percent of information workers who commuted via electronic highway. Corporate America's desire to become lean and mean, legislated mandates to meet air quality standards, and local government incentives to experiment in telecommuting all combined to accelerate the trend. Within a decade half the 50 million information workers, like Joan, visit their offices only rarely.

Now close enough to downtown to pick out the familiar building shapes, it

still strikes her as odd to see whole new façades of operable windows, balconies with potted plants, and even schools and parks in the sky where pristine hermetically-sealed mirrored glass and granite skyscrapers once stood. In fact, they still stand. Only now, their skeletons support a rich new variety of human activity. Many former office buildings now provide housing for a wide range of urban dwellers: the retired, the very wealthy, newly-formed young families, as well as the very poor. The seventy-five story First Interstate Building is in the middle of converting its lower forty-three floors to a new USC downtown campus with student housing on part of the outside of each floor and classrooms near the middle. The old TransAmerica building, a few short blocks from the Convention Center is now one of L.A.'s largest convention hotels. Citycorp Plaza's two towers have become a highrise "Silicon Valley" where pink-collar workers assemble new micro-technology miracles in the sealed air-conditioned labs that used to be offices. The Plaza itself is now a mini-electronics market. Arco Plaza is now Villas Los Angeles, affordable housing for large families; at its base sit a new primary school and a variety of family services. Caltrans headquarters is a major medical center. California Plaza and Wells Fargo have hardly changed at all. Dozens of other former high-rise office buildings are now serving new uses, but conversion to housing is the most common. Almost 18,000 new apartments now occupy over half of what once was downtown's thirty-five to forty million square feet of office space.

Joan flashes back to the late 1990s when telecommuting's momentum really began to take hold. Downtown Los Angeles seemed all but deserted then even in daylight. At night the skyline darkened. A sales person herself, Joan remembers the panic when office

tenants could not be found to occupy the space produced by the mad overbuilding of the 1980s. Owners and lenders became desperate. Deficits mounted for city and county governments dependent on real estate revenues. For a while Joan and Max, like many intellectuals, had feared that the city depicted in the classic film *Blade Runner* might come to be. They had keenly followed the unfolding crisis as a number of office-building conversions, particularly Donald Trump's high-profile conversion of New York City's Gulf and Western tower to luxury housing, led to a review of such possible reconfigurations of L.A.'s empty buildings. Today, the downtown core is vital again: its inhabitants daily weave a rich tapestry of housing, work, entertainment, and commerce. Downtown is at last becoming the viable center city that boosters had tried for years in vain to actualize.

Taking the off-ramp at Ninth Street and proceeding north on Figueroa, Joan enters one of her favorite downtown areas, which is bustling with human activity. Multi-story, open-air markets occupy former parking ramps, and groups of children walk to nearby schools, a community of all hues, ethnicities, and races. Dozens of languages are spoken. New Bodegas and Souks, Chinese, Central American, Thai, Korean, and Mexican eating establishments—from street vendors to elegant restaurants—all flourish along Figueroa. It's one of the most exciting international urban areas in the world, she remembers as she has each time she makes the trip, and her family hasn't been taking advantage of it. Passing Seventh Street, she sees hundreds of people pouring out of the T station, mostly technical and piece workers from the apartment areas that have sprung up around transit corridors and stations throughout the region. When Joan and Max bought their tract home



Drawing by Marvin Rubin for L.A. 2000 report.

in 1994, over half of L.A.'s households rented. Now more than three-fourths occupy rental units. Home ownership is on the wane throughout L.A. And looking at these downtown housing opportunities, Joan wonders, "would living here be so bad after all? It certainly isn't like it was a few years ago."

Arriving at her headquarters building, Joan carefully drives into the secure garage dedicated to corporate employees and takes the office elevator, which is separated from the elevators that access moderate income apartments that occupy the lower twenty floors of the corporate headquarters building. Arriving at the office well ahead of her scheduled meeting, she

schmoozes with colleagues in the "Commons," a high-tech work area with laptop ports at every lounge chair and lunch table. She knows there are still some private offices somewhere on the floor for "sitters": administrators, human resource officers, and senior management. The support functions are all along "Main Street," the lavishly appointed office corridor that links alcoves for discussions, workrooms, huddle rooms, and libraries. As always, Joan thinks the trip downtown is a pleasure, a welcome break from her now-routine telecommuting life.

As Joan drives home, she reflects on how different the hustle and bustle of downtown living is as compared to

the prim, almost pastoral pleasantness of her suburban subdivision. To be sure things have changed for the better. When she and Max work from home, they and the majority of their adult neighbors are physically present during the daylight hours in the community. No more daily travel means much reduced transportation costs, savings on clothing, and fewer expensive lunches. It also means more involvement with civic neighborhood projects, school activities, and neighborhood events. And most importantly, meeting one's neighbors. Shared values, cohesiveness, and mutual protection have replaced suburban anomie and self-absorption.

Fewer families move than used to. Joan imagines that whole generations might now be born and flourish in the same place. The electronic information super-highway makes geographic relocation less of an imperative for upward mobility in corporate America. Joan's community has become much more like "Our Town U.S.A." The small village shopping center, town square, and Main Street promenade all support this mythic character. It is really becoming a great place to live. Somehow the vibrancy of the living environment in her home enclave strikes Joan as she drives through the green belt.

As she approaches the village ring, more signs of the change become apparent. All-day concentration of consumers in the villages has become a boon to localized retailing, entertainment, and food service establishments. Even professional service providers—lawyers, accountants, architects, and health specialists—have opened small practices. Auto dealers and manufacturers suffered so much from this new breed of one-car suburban family consumer that they've "retooled" to produce and sell all variety of products for the new sustainable society. Smog is no longer a concern for the L.A. basin. This delights Joan as she drives toward

her inland home, which used to be covered with lethal air. Far fewer public resources are devoted to new freeway construction and maintenance of existing roadways. Bus and transit use is up everywhere. Even the use of natural resources for building materials has diminished significantly. A strange kind of ecological balance has set in whereby it seems that human beings no longer need to control nature and squander the land as many had thought necessary. All in all it is quite a satisfactory life.

Yet Joan, content in her secure world, is alternately comforted and frightened by the security guards and gates that surround her "village." She wonders as she pulls in her driveway about the consequences of the new urban order, especially when she makes this drive and hears reruns of that old favorite radio show, "Which Way L.A.?" Why is the world made up of two classes with such disparity: the commuter literate and everyone else? Has the globalization of the market and its technological revolution enabled fundamental change in work and the workplace for a privileged few at the expense of the vast majority of workers? Why has downtown's multicultural populous, economically and culturally less secure than we are, nonetheless produced more vibrant art, more enticing music, more acclaimed theater companies? Is there any common ground on which people from the center city and villagers might meet?

Joan has to stop the ruminations: Her mind is racing and her migraine has set in. Too late: there is nothing she can do now but try to escape. Barely inside the house, she heads for the new family Sega Ultima Virtual Reality Module. Today she will visit the Court of the Sun King Louis XVI.

Painterly Vision

James Doolin

Architecture California is pleased to present James Doolin's visions. James Doolin lives in Los Angeles and has been making large landscape paintings about southern California for over twenty-five years. He exhibits regularly, and his work is represented in many public and corporate collections and reproduced in numerous books on

American and Australian art. He has received a Guggenheim Fellowship and three NEA grants. He is currently the Artist for the North Hollywood Redline Subway station and the Lead Artist and Muralist for the future Metropolitan Transit Authority headquarters building in downtown Los Angeles.



Vanishing Point, 1992, oil on canvas, 48" x 72".



Stairway, 1991-1992, oil on canvas, 90" x 72".

INS and OUTS

Harry Gamboa

Noted East Los Angeles artist Harry Gamboa crafted this Chicano homage to 1984—illustrated by the artist Gronk—for Corazon de Aztlan in April of 1982. It is reprinted in this edition of Architecture California as Gamboa's reminder that the future has arrived and without shame we don't recognize it. It's almost lunch time....

I should have noticed the official-looking unmarked car that had been following me closely for nearly half a block. I can usually sense when someone is staring at me regardless of whether or not I am the focus of friendly or frenzied attention. It was my lunch break and I was on my way on foot to keep my date with Linda at the CobrAHorsE for a hot dog and fries. The dull green car pulled up to the curb as I approached the corner of First and Central streets. Two tall men dressed in bland beige suits emerged from the car quickly and walked directly in front of me so as to block my path. The man to my left was completely bald while the other had such excessive hair growth that he had to shave his neck in order to separate his beard from his chest

"Your identification papers," said the bald man. "You must present us with proof," he continued in an authoritatively monotone demand.

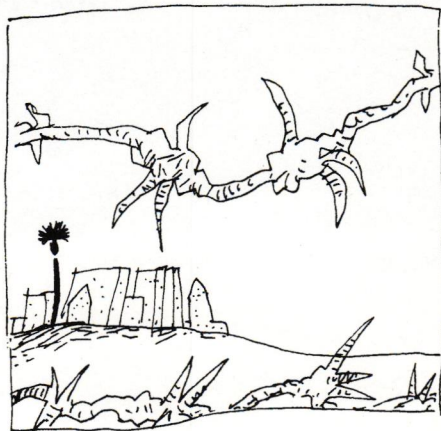
"All I have is a library card. Who are you anyway, the police?" I asked as I fumbled though my relatively empty pockets. I reached what seemed to be the card and pulled out the photograph of Iris Chacon which I had clipped out of that morning's *La Opinion*. "I must have left the card at work," I said as the clean shaven neck man quickly

moved behind me to prevent my escape.

"You have to present us with some kind of evidence that will show you have a legal right to be here. We will have to confine you to this space until you have complied with the official requirement," said the bald man who was reflecting much light. I looked down the street and noticed that there were other green cars cruising up and down the area. Many pedestrians as well as those motorists who had been ordered to stop were also being detained. A few individuals were even being led into dull green vans that were guarded with bars across the windows.

"You must have some kind of I.D.," the man behind me insisted.

"You guys will have to excuse me. I haven't done anything wrong and I have someone waiting for me whose dog is probably getting cold," I said as I attempted to walk around the man who had remained motionless in front of me. The fur coated man responded immediately by twisting my arms be-



hind me, handcuffing my left wrist then dragging me over to an adjacent doorway where he passed the cuffs through a door handle before securing my right wrist. I was bound to the glass door in a matter of seconds.

"Can you prove you have the legal right to work?" asked the man as he loosened his grip.

"If you are arresting me then I demand to know the charge and I won't say anything until I've talked with my lawyer," I said as I tried to wrest my wrists free.

"You are not under arrest. You are handcuffed to the door and will remain like that until you satisfy our demands with the proper responses. You are being restrained from continuing your activities on the basis that you do not appear to be a legitimate element of our society. We are conducting expulsion raids in this area because known non-members have been reported to frequent such neighborhoods," said the bald man who was developing a slight twitch in his left eye. "If you would have had the appropriate documents this could have been avoided," he continued as he blinked uncontrollably.

"What does it take to be an *illegitimate* member of your society? Money, a birth certificate, deadly weapons, a false face?" I asked as the handcuffs began to carve their way into my wrists.

"How about all that and more. You seem to forget where and when you are," said the bald man who had produced a Polaroid camera from his pocket. He pointed the camera at close range attempting to focus clearly. The twitch in his eye had become a full-fledged spasm and was now interfering with his fulfilling the role as photographer. He rubbed his eye strenuously as though he were polishing his boots. His partner suggested that he focus with the other eye. The camera was raised once again and two shots in im-



mediate sequence were taken of my face. Brown hair, brown eyes, male, Latin, all these traits developing in sixty seconds. The reflecting photographer kept one photograph for himself while the other man attached his to a metal clipboard.

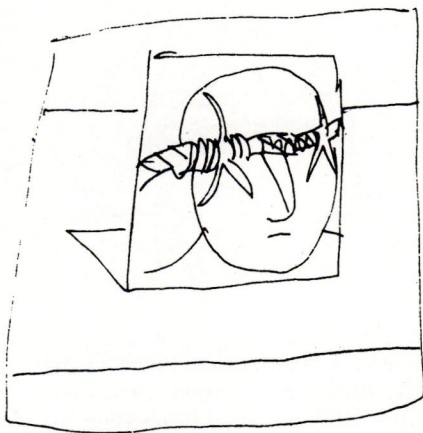
"This is Los Angeles, 1982," I blurted out in momentary self doubt.

"Correct. Now you can tell me your name, place of birth, address, and in plain sight," said the man who was now rubbing his eye with great care.

"My name is Emilio Tirado. I was born here in L.A. I live at 1201 East Indiana Street. I have webbed arm pits."

"Are you certain that the place of birth is Los Angeles?" the man asked suspiciously.

I looked across the street and saw that six vans were nearly filled to capacity with people who had been abducted from their automobiles, the various shops, restaurants, and the sidewalk as I had been similarly accosted. With the exception of the abandoned private automobiles and the official green vehicles, the street was vacant. Many of the merchants locked their doors to escape questioning while others who complied were sitting inside the vans obediently awaiting further action. I could hear the loud buzz of a low flying helicopter that was circling overhead. I would definitely be late for my lunch date. It was already time that I be returning to work! I was feeling somewhat confused as I looked at the skyscrapers in the distance.



The buildings were recognizable to me, but somehow the events that were taking place before them seemed so unfamiliar. The scenario appeared to be a bizarre reenactment of the Forties when the Japanese Americans were plucked from this area like fleas from a dog.

"What do you plan to do with me? Where are you going to take me? What agency are you with? Immigration, FBI, the Army?" I asked as the man with the troubled eye took out his wallet and flashed a large stainless steel badge that had neither a name nor a number imprinted on it.

"You are staying and they are leaving. None of you belong here but you're the only one we cannot eject. We are not at liberty to say which agency we are connected with or even whether or not we are in fact connected to any agency," said the man whose eye was now emitting a steady stream of tears. He wrote down a few notes on the back of the instant photograph.

"Who are you to decide which of us will stay? Where did you get the authority to handcuff me like this?" I said in an attempt to assert my rights.

"The decision of who will stay is a matter of policy. We enforce whatever policy prevails. As for being handcuffed, you allowed it. You waited for us to surround and overpower you. You've been fairly polite. That's your

downfall! It's possible that policy will soon require us to impose further restrictions on your kind. When that time comes you'll be more inconvenienced than what mere handcuffs can supply. I must warn you that should any report of this event be made available to the press or other parties, you will be endangering the personal safety of yourself and whatever individuals we may connect you with. We will file our report with the key monitor and he will dispatch someone to release you. It may take hours. Many key monitors are hired for their inherent laziness. It is not uncommon for them to throw away our reports. There have been many instances where our detainees have remained unattended. You are certain that you are a native of this city?" the bald man then motioned to his partner that they leave.

"Will you release me if I say I was born somewhere else?"

"It's much too late for that. Your classification has been recorded," he commented with a tone of finalization. The two men got back into their automobile and drove across the street to join the line which had been formed by the other vehicles along the double yellow line that divides the street unequally. The six vans started their engines with the doors being shut tight by the attending personnel who were additionally securing them with padlocks. The dull green procession of vans and cars began to move slowly down First Street past the New Otani Hotel, City Hall, and beyond reason. The street was void of any compassion as it began to fill with the normal flow of traffic.

I'd have to wait for the key monitor to send someone over to unshackle me. Hopefully, he'd be prompt in having his subordinates retrieve an obviously expressive pair of handcuffs. I could see that there were others who had been fastened to inanimate urban objects. Some were strapped to parking

meters, light posts, car doors, guard rails, and a few individuals were tagged onto a single telephone booth. I could only hope that Linda was among those who had evaded the unidentified agents. I'd have a lot of explaining to do once I'd get back to work. It would be difficult to make anyone believe the enormity of oppression that had been unleashed in the nameless desire to expel nonmembers from society.

I was becoming impatient and saw that there was little hope for any immediate release from this situation. I called out to a few individuals who were now walking about freely. The unassuming pedestrians who had not been here to witness the roundup were not interested in assisting those of us who were reluctantly on public display. I managed to get a man's attention for a moment as he drove past me; he slowed down but continued on totally uninvolved and absorbed. I could see a young woman walking up the street reading a newspaper. She walked slowly as she read. She walked close to me and looked up from behind the front page.

"You stood me up." It was Linda.

"I have an excellent reason for my delay," I said feeling a bit warmer just looking at her.

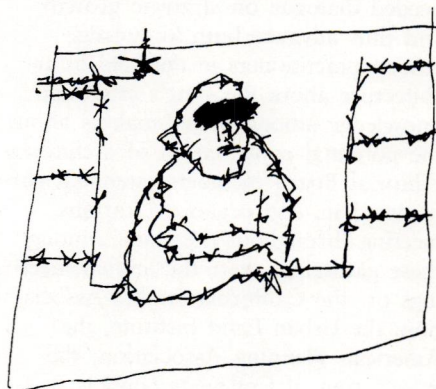
"I know. I saw how they were arresting everyone. It's the new law. They can do that now. Whenever they want. They don't have to give any warning either! I never thought that we'd lose so much control. Something is going to have to be done," she said as the newspaper unfolded before her intense gaze.

"I have to wait until they send someone over with a key," I said as I leaned over revealing the handcuffs.

"I overheard what they told someone who was tied to the restaurant. It sounded like it'll take awhile; that's why I brought you your lunch. I hope you like mustard and relish. Onions would have been a bit much." Linda

pulled out my meal from her purse and was kind enough to read the entire article relating to the new law as I ate from her hand. It took nearly two hours before a man dressed in drab green overalls arrived in a discolored panel truck. He walked over with his set of keys and released me with the functional expertise that only practice can bring.

"That'll be five dollars," he said as he reached out his hand for payment. "You can view it as a fine or as the rental fee, but I must get paid," he continued as he must have noticed how upset I had become. I reached into my pocket and pulled what seemed to be some cash. It was the photograph of Iris Chacon again. He accepted the photograph as full payment. Linda and I made a maddened run towards the anonymous crowds of Downtown where our chances of survival increased with each faceless person who separated us from the authorities. We ran down Broadway past the million people, past the Million Dollar theater, we slipped past the reaches of people's consciousness. We wanted to warn them but they'd know soon enough. It was really too late. Next time we would fight or run. This time we'd run just for the practice. We ran to the edge of despair looking behind our shoulders making certain the authorities didn't push us over the social cliff.



Eight Introspections

The Editorial Board

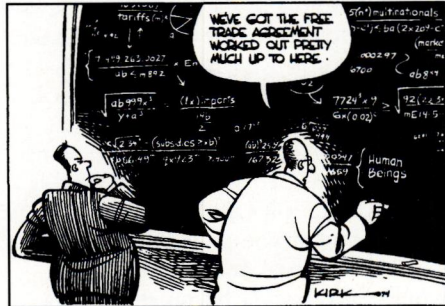
One year ago the Editorial Board set out to commemorate the fifty year anniversary of the California Council by leading an effort to reevaluate California's history and stir debate about its future. With the help of the AIA California Council Foundation, the Editorial Board planned a year-long series of activities aimed at broad consideration of issues concerning architecture's relationship to strategic growth in California, with the simultaneous development of this special edition of the journal.

Based on the particular state-wide attention being paid to the problems of economic development in the 1994 election year, the Editorial Board took this unique opportunity to communicate with all California architects, architects across the country, policy makers dealing with physical planning, and the interested public. A cross-program effort was launched to address issues of economic recession, strategic growth, and physical and environmental planning for the state.

In order to push forward the needed dialogue on strategic growth and thus advance both knowledge among practitioners in the field of architecture about the state's crisis and knowledge among policy makers about the potential contribution of architects, Editorial Board members attended, participated in, and organized various meeting throughout the state. Among these gatherings were the annual meetings of the California Studies Association, the Urban Land Institute, the American Planning Association, the Association of Collegiate Schools of

Architecture, and the AIA National Urban Design Committee, as well as the AIA Convention. In addition, Editorial Board members attended the University of California Humanities Research Institute conference "The Case of California: Processes of Diversity in Community," the UCLA conference "New Directions for California," the Local Government Commission conference "Putting Our Communities Back on Their Feet," the Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art symposium "Urban Revisions," and the AIA Santa Barbara Chapter's coalition symposium "Designing for Sustainable Communities," and participated in focus group sessions in Los Angeles and Sacramento.

The introspections shared here by the Editorial Board and the Editor reflect this period of discussion, and serve to highlight repeated concerns that surfaced around the state as well as the focal interests of each particular Board member architect. Additionally, these brief comments introduce the Editorial Board members to the readership and, hopefully, will provoke your comment and further participation in the activities of *Architecture California*.



Kirk Victor

Age Lines the Pedestrian Pocket

Sigrid Miller Pollin, AIA



Perth, Australia

This is a nice city, Perth. The air is clean. The streets are swept. The views are spectacular. It seems innocent, an adolescent city out here on the west coast of Australia. It is growing with promise, prodded by the city fathers and mothers to grow up right: eat right, stay away from drugs, get into sports, be healthy. Visiting Curtin University with a design studio focused on urban infill, I am compelled to compare the growth of this young city with past, present, and future growth patterns in Southern California, where I live.

Here sprawl appears on the horizon in the form of reverse-frontage single-family-home 'estates' with names like "Chelsea Heights" and "Secret Harbor." The city redevelopment agency seemingly aware of contemporary international trends in planning fosters alternatives to suburban sprawl and has planned the East Perth Rede-

velopment area based on the "Urban Village" concept. Compact, medium density mixed-use planned blocks will replace vacant lots or obsolete light industrial buildings at the city's edge. The Urban Village is planned to be a walkable community—a pedestrian pocket—linked to a light rail stop with a near-by park, work spaces, convenience retail, cafes, a hotel, and sweeping views to the Swan River. Presumably it will offer the people of Perth more opportunities to live and work in the city. It seems to have all the prescribed ingredients for a viable alternative to those suburban estates popping up helter skelter as you drive out of the city. It is a sophisticated plan in many ways.

As we consider alternatives to suburban sprawl in California—the Compact City, the Traditional Neighborhood Development, the Pedestrian-Oriented Development, and the Urban Village, as yet largely unexecuted in Southern California—we might also speak frankly about our misgivings. There is an uneasiness in the eyes of people in Perth about its first Urban Village, which looks so good on paper. As I project beyond "California at a Crossroads"—while the Congress of New Urbanism huddles sub rosa somewhere in the United States, I welcome the healthy skepticism that has already found its way onto the discussion table.

Those who aptly realize both the economic, cultural, and social cost of the suburbs imagine moving back into the city and rightly so. Yet they want the city not for more new sanitized

'communities' but for the energy, the convenience, the variety of people, the street life, the rough edges, and the unexpected. A very bright young woman architecture student in my studio here all but refused to work with the Urban Village concept. She believes it will generate a sub-urban island of all new streets, all new (albeit mixed-use) buildings and landscape within the city limits. Its artificial pond, which will drain at night to irrigate the plantings may make you feel like you're living near one of the putting holes of a miniature golf course.

So, what am I saying? As we strive to resist the purely market-driven development that drives California, we readily see that the Urban Village, which has most of the elements planners desire, might proliferate over the next fifty years. But these "villages" won't feel like real working towns or cities for quite some time, if ever. Appreciating the skepticism, I nonetheless highly value the impetus for this alternative measure.

Time—lots of time—will be a big factor. Local job sources, aging buildings, community personalities, people who have put down roots and developed traditions—like the annual summer solstice parade in Santa Barbara—make a community in which people feel at home. Both the daily and special events that make a vital community—the things that cannot be planned or sketched or recorded on video—the things that can only be vaguely imagined now may integrate these villages into the fabric of the city. At this crossroads, I am looking beyond these new plans, even the good ones. I recognize the myriad of possibilities that will arise when age lines the pedestrian pocket.

Architects as Advocates for Community and Context

Carol Shen, FAIA



Singapore

Vincent Scully writes in his preface to *Architecture and Urbanism*, "No history of architecture can deal any longer with individual buildings only, or with buildings in a vacuum." This spring I traveled to central France to visit my son who was spending his junior year abroad, and I am often in Singapore where we have several projects completed or in construction. As reflected in their buildings, the integration of culture and the wide acceptance of common values in these two countries (though quite different from each other) contrast sharply with the diversity of viewpoints, independence and individualism here in the United States.

California and the 'Wild West' were tamed by hardy settlers who put their own survival first, without a thought for the 'greater good', much less any notion of community benefit.

This spirit still prevails. Despite lip service paid to the melting pot, the gap between the haves and have-nots grows, and we have become more isolated and alienated as more newcomers arrive. Although Americans are the envy of many people all over the world for our independence and material abundance, the fear and loneliness of our 'a-culture' remain a sad part of our daily life. We lack a sense of community, and our displays of private wealth contrast with our neglect of the shared, public realm. In our commuting, in our workplaces, and in our detached homes, we rugged individualists have found ourselves isolated from the exchange, learning and fellowship with other people.

Furthermore, our preference for independence has lead us to become well-trained consumers, each pursuing our own private, exclusive version of the good life, however decadent or wasteful. We want our own cars, backyards, swimming pools...rather than public transit, parks, and clubs.

I think this way of life has had profound implications for how we practice architecture in this country. Reflecting this "a-cultural" context, many architects work as the Lone Ranger, imposing their individual genius, creating egocentric statements or art works, designing objects ignorant of history or context: the me-generation of architecture.

Many of us, however, came to the profession, wide-eyed and idealistic, hoping to contribute to a better environment. The interdisciplinary nature of an architectural education which includes planning, landscape, economics, sociology, and art offers great preparation for students who can meet the fu-

ture in the broadest of terms. Beginning with this education, following through with a heart-felt concern for the "greater good," I believe architects could play a role in improving our "a-culture" and could help to reduce the growing feelings of isolation and alienation in our society by making places that foster exposure and interaction and embrace diversity.

As we look ahead, from the crossroads, I hope we can alter our self-centered and introverted approach of the last fifty years, and look beyond each individual commission towards improving our whole way of living—building better neighborhoods, fostering stronger connections among people, enhancing sites and streets, making humane places. Every job we undertake offers opportunities not only to design a good project, but to make a positive, memorable impact upon its surroundings and our culture.

For example, in our office, whenever we see a chance, the public domain is emphasized and celebrated because we believe it is crucial for people to interact with one another. On every project we endeavor to discover ways to strengthen the public spaces. "Public" may mean an entry to a school, a lobby of a theater, an atrium in a shopping center, or streets of a city. The interaction and activity in these places bring life to our projects, make them successful, and improve their contexts, be they campuses, districts, commercial centers, or downtowns.

Small, subtle, incremental, evolutionary adjustments can accrue and result in new views, real shifts, and great overall impact. Californians have always been open to change and, confronted with some new experience, have quickly learned, assimilated, and adapted. In the years ahead, as architects, we can, project by project, contribute to the development of places for more humane, connected ways of living.

Density Isn't a Four Letter Word

John Field, FAIA



Surabaya, Indonesia

How is it that our society, which has sanitized every obscenity by making it part of ordinary communication has made the word "density" more unmentionable than any of the old forbidden four letter words? The California hysteria about the concept has exaggerated this innocuous noun into a threatening potential menace that knows no moderation. That is an unfortunate climate of opinion in which to make rational planning decisions.

While California was a frontier, black and white concepts were easy, but the notions upon which we based planning for the enormous growth of the last forty years need to be reconsidered. It is unfortunate that the notion of density in public usage only conjures up a picture of highrise towers because there is a livable density that is a more logical next step in California than continuing the endless sprawl.

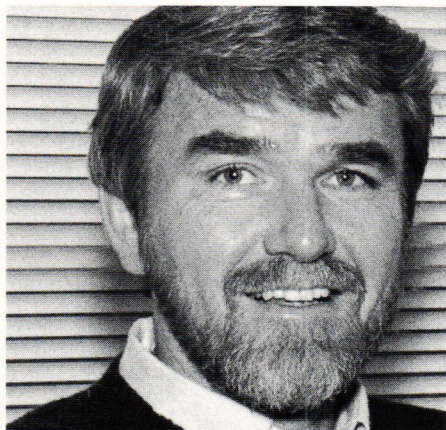
It was a sad commentary on California's myopia on this subject when the prestigious 2020 Committee, chosen by the Governor to offer guidance for our future, recognized that the obvious way to preserve the beauty and vitality of the state was to intensify density. But, at the same time, they agreed that they would make no mention of that for fear that the public would reject all their other recommendations in their passion to resist the suggestion that the suburbs become towns.

Architects of the eighties produced enough sculptural monuments. What we need now is to reinforce the fragile context of the original centers of our suburbs with sufficient density to make a complete cycle of life there, with the sense of place that we see in many older small towns. This requires architects to get over fear of our designs being missed in the background. And it requires a scale great enough to define the public places between them. That does not mean highrises, but it does mean we should throw away the old magic of 'forty feet'. The height of four sheets of plywood is not a reasonable foundation for planning now. This kind of density is what makes cities walkable and hence human, and not the nostalgia for the Victorian front porch.

This change of attitude will take nothing short of a crusade by our profession. We are the logical leaders and we can expect no help from the developers or banks who most immediately decide what gets built. We are at a crossroads and the alternative is more freeways for more suburbs stretched into horizontal highrises.

Debate Sets the Stage

W. Mike Martin, AIA



Kyoto, Japan

The abstract image of "California at a Crossroads" represents a stimulating conceptual confusion. A *crossroads* infers a specific place where choices are clear and concise; however, California appears to be lost on unknown back roads without a map. We live in a state where the out-migration of intellectual capital is a major drain on future corporate and public agendas; where the educational system has been under constant attack for almost two decades; where the police and criminal justice systems have no ability to control crime and corruption; where the largest homeless population of any of the fifty states finds refuge; where affordable housing is in short supply with no remuneration on the horizon; where a transportation system once financially stable is now faced with suspension of projects due to funding shortfalls; where the health care system strains to

provide badly-needed services; and this list could go on.

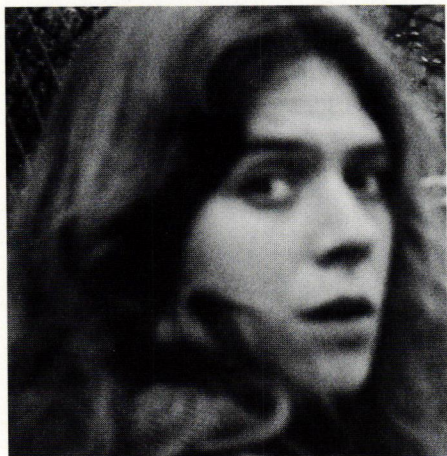
Why has this happened? There seem to be many factors. The end of the cold war and the need to convert a military-based economy to a peacetime economy is one. Another, numerous disasters from earthquakes to fires have strained the financial stability of the state treasury. Also, there is an increased demand for education at all levels at a time when resources directed to these institutions have been reduced.

The challenge is significant, requiring a commitment Californians have not yet made to defining a future whose characteristics are as yet unknown. This challenge will not be met by fine tuning, or even by a major overhaul. A broad-based far-reaching project of embracing and facilitating a radical transformation is needed. This transformation must transcend habit and status quo to reach a level of decision making such that partisan politics has no role and leadership is grounded in a respect for people, that what we believe in is more important than the social structure, and that outcomes reflect the collaborative effort of those with the most at stake.

This edition of *Architecture California* by no means exhausts the dialogue on these concerns; it fits into a debate already occurring throughout our profession and others, and in the popular discourse across the state and nation. If a map is to be drawn to lead California through the "Crossroads," bold efforts on the part of every citizen, politician, and corporate and public leader are required.

Critical Exchange: A Locus of Professional Identity

Christine Killory, RIBA, Assoc. AIA



Santiago, Chile

Commercial pressures have all but destroyed the possibility of establishing a common ground for thoughtful discourse in architecture, once regarded as an essential part of professional life. Marketing programs and competition for jobs have eliminated the peer evaluation of our work. Following contemporary trends, media coverage of architecture is increasingly dominated by personality and personal relationships. The content of most architecture magazines is influenced not only by the need to sell them, but also by celebrity architects who will tolerate nothing less than a rave review, eliminating the distinction between critical exercise and press releases. The interests of academics and practitioners are increasingly divergent as theory and practice, once

separated only by an interval of time, become opposite poles of a shrinking sphere of influence. Theory is obscure, snobbish, and boring; practice is complacent, brain-dead, and boring. Architecture—theory and practice—is ruinously self-absorbed, too much interested in its image-makers and not enough in defining its role in society. Lacking a necessary intellectual agenda for the future, is the profession doomed to slow extinction?

Above the bottom line, architects still crave the good opinion of their colleagues, as well as the satisfaction of their clients. Issues, not architects, ideas, not buildings, matter more. Because the status of the profession is dependent in large measure on how individual architects define its scope of intervention, *Architecture California* is more than ever a uniquely important cultural resource and valuable forum for the exploration and exchange of ideas—free of commercial pressures and professional rivalries. In addition to financial contributions from dues and regular expressions of appreciation for *Architecture California*, more architects should support it in an active way—as contributors, sponsors, or members of the Editorial Board. In a time when no profession or institution is immune to wrenching change, the quality of our thought reflects our fitness for the future.

Engineering Dystopia: Hard Solutions to Soft Problems

Craig Hodgetts, AIA



Hanover, Germany

We are fortunate to live in a region of the world in which our physical needs have been so carefully anticipated. There is no sign that California's systems—water, transport, power, learning, communication, amusement, security—have even begun to flag. Yet most of us seek the emotional security of our automobiles and homes. Coffee bars and fern clubs notwithstanding, there is little between workplace and household that's not striped in ten foot lanes.

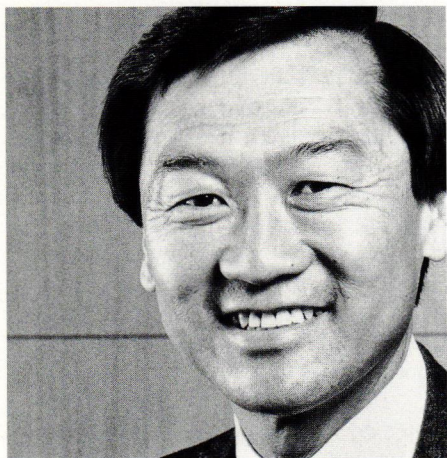
Now, with the ability of another highway to not only deliver "information" but perform many of the cumbersome tasks of living by the push of a button, might not some neo-Nader have good reason to question the environmental cost of commuting, shopping, and those excursions to the zoo?

There is no legislation, no mandate, no collective desire that will staunch this flow of markets, money, and merchandise. Only the pleasure of fellowship in an environment that engenders the best in all of us—an environment designed to enhance the human equation rather than the bottom line, to empower everyone in productive social activity rather than supply visual candy for the consumption of a few.

This is a job for architects. If we don't do it, there is a line of graphic artists, animators, storytellers, and snake-oil salesmen who know just what the public buys and are anxious to deliver. The only problem: we need a ticket to get in the line.

Architects Are at a Crossroads

Gordon Chong, FAIA



Washington, D.C.

California is at a crossroads...economists tell us that changes to California are "structural" rather than merely "cyclical." Our profession has been jolted by these changes brought on by events such as base closures, the downturn of the aerospace industry, overbuilding in the 1980s, and reduction in state budgets for schools, universities, and public works. While the economy may be improving in other parts of the nation, I don't think we yet realize the full impact of the structural changes on the way we will practice in the future. To advance our role in the design and construction process, now more than ever we will need to provide *value*, both real and perceived, to our clients and the broader public. As is true for our state, the architects of California are at a crossroads.

I think our future success will in great part depend upon our ability to lead in three efforts. 1) As practitioners, our challenge will be to "re-engineer" the project delivery process, including a redefinition of our role, responsibilities, and risks as architects. 2) As a profession, we must elevate those in nontraditional practices (corporate architects, public architects, campus architects, etc.) to higher decision-making levels. Additionally, we should encourage individuals trained in architecture to pursue unrelated careers in business, education, management, and politics. 3) As guardians of a field of inquiry, we will need to place higher value on education by redefining the process of educating undergraduate students, investing in research (similar to the medical and engineering professions), and supporting substantive life-long learning.

Globalization, technology, and market demands will not permit us to sit by idly and still exist. I'm optimistic that California architects will seize the opportunity to change, and that in the year 2004 we will not recognize the practices we had in 1994.

The Myth of Market Sustainability

Lian Hurst Mann, AIA



Dessau, Germany

The spectre of the Bauhaus draws me to Europe and to Germany as I attempt to synthesize my experiences considering California at a Crossroads. California architects, so removed from Europe, nonetheless look toward the Pacific Rim with the utopian impulse that characterizes the best of our profession's European ties. Thus, having listened to analysis, critique, reflection, and ambition about the future of California, I have to say that the vital tradition of utopian planning among architects is best enabled when there are strong social movements making demands on capitalism. Such movements force not only planning but planning outside the constraints of the market.

In the present historical situation, when world-wide socialism is in full collapse and market-based theories of governance abound, when the problems of

our society are more out of control than in recent historical memory, architects tend to deny rather than engage fundamental contradictions.

During the last major capitalist crisis, under great pressure from the worldwide and domestic socialist and communist movements, Franklin Roosevelt appealed to farmers, workers, and the middle class to curtail the "Economic Royalists," those capitalists who refused any form of regulation, cleverly equating them with the King of England. He developed a populist rhetoric and supported codes of conduct in industry and labor rights: a theory of regulated capitalist behavior that expanded the public sector and created arenas outside the market mechanism. Upton Sinclair's EPIC (End Poverty in California) campaign represented a far more radical and populist version of the Roosevelt strategy with the more laudable goal of saving humanity rather than capitalism.

The explicit rejection of this strategy, which Reagan launched from his California governorship, has left U.S. and global capitalism in a state of extreme crisis. The necessity to advance business objectives by subsidizing and protecting capital has never been more integral to U.S. governmental policy.

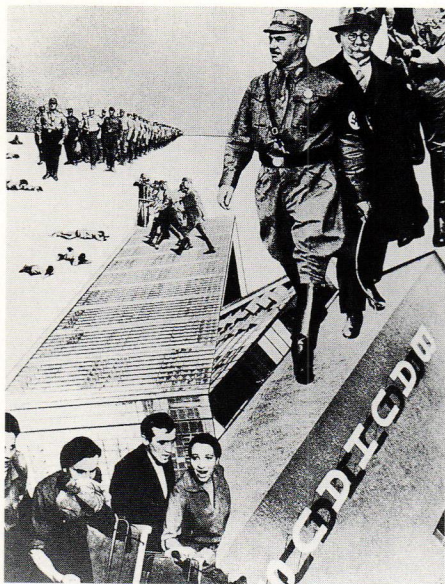
The leaders among us, perhaps Californians, must reopen the ideological discussion regarding "economic royalists" and call for a socialized or at least social component of government outside of the market, if we are to rescue and transform our profession's greatest inheritance from the modern era, architecture's social project.

Letters

THE MODEL WORKS



Comix, Courtesy Steve Rasmussen, Riverside.



1932, *The Attack Against the Bauhaus*, photo collage by Iwao Yamawaki.

CALIFORNIA AT A CROSSROADS?

The work of the Japanese Bauhaus student Iwao Yamawaki comments on the closure of the Bauhaus in autumn of 1932 with a montage of contemporary



Baustelle, Dessau, Germany, 1994.

press photographs. It shows a group of SA storm troopers walking on the overturned glass façade of the Bauhaus building. The large figure on the right is SA chief of staff Ernst Röhm, carrying a whip, followed by the nationalist economic leader and press magnate Alfred Hugenberg, with a mustache. The group of people in the foreground come from a report in the *Arbeiter Illustrierte Zeitung*—*Workers Magazine*—about a propaganda play put on by the International Workers Theater Association.

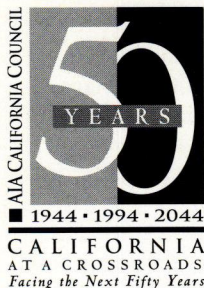
The Dessau Bauhaus was closed by decree of the Dessau Municipal council on 1 October 1932, after a xenophobic and anti-Semitic defamatory campaign organized by the National Socialists, before the end of the Weimar Republic and before the final dissolution of the Bauhaus in Berlin 1933. We know what happened after that: several Bauhaus members—artists, architects, and designers—were hunted down and murdered during the Nazi years. Others found asylum abroad.

In 1994, more than sixty years after “The Attack Against the Bauhaus,” violent attacks against foreigners and minorities are on the increase in this country. We must not allow this to happen. The Bauhaus-Archiv supports the “Museums Against Xenophobia” initiative.

via fax
Bauhaus-Archiv
Berlin



Los Angeles, 1992.



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Forthcoming theme: Other Than Architecture